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Spectres of the Night and Morning Light.

BY

J. E. PAYNTER.



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Spectres of the Night and Morning Light.

CHAPTER I.

SPECTRES OF THE NIGHT—UNBELIEF AND REASON.

“**W**HAT is life and what is death? Tell me that, and as soon as you can answer these questions, I will tell you my reasons for believing there is a God.”

When the speaker had finished, he settled back in his chair with an air of triumph. I had just entered the barber shop for my Saturday shave and was not at all surprised at the trend of the conversation, at the moment I had entered, as both the disputants were well known to me, and had been for a long time.

The speaker was Jack Good, a man much given to religious discussion, but generally relying on assertion to carry his point, instead of reasonable deductions, and when cornered himself in his attempt to uphold the creeds of Orthodoxy, generally re-

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sorted to abusive and sometimes un-Christianlike language.

The other side of this particular discussion was upheld by Alex Redmond, the proprietor of this shop, who was himself a pronounced atheist, and on account of an occasional "let-off of steam", on his part, the barber shop had become a sort of village debating school.

As I took my place in the barber's chair, I noticed by the reflection in the large mirror that the room had a fourth occupant, a small, neatly-dressed, gray-haired gentleman, who was apparently absorbed in thought. Then, after a slight, nervous twitch of the neck he began in a slow, well-modulated voice that seemed to make one feel that he considered it his duty to speak the truth as he understood it,

"There is no death, and life is but the breath of God." He paused, that we might get the full meaning of his statement, and then proceeded, "The passage from this world to the Spiritland is like turning the leaves of a book, the hatching of an egg, or the development of an oak from an acorn."

The barber, throwing up his chin in a pity-you-simpleton manner, inquired as he lathered my face, "Can you give us some proof of your statements, Uncle Jack?"

"I can," replied the gray-haired gentleman, "if you will accompany me to our meeting to-morrow evening."

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"A d—— fraud," declared Alex Redmond, between his teeth. "Some people in this world like to be suckers. What do you say, Joe?" he asked, addressing me.

"I think," I replied, "that in so-called spiritualism there is a lot of fraud, but to say that it is all fraud is a pretty sweeping statement. I certainly think that these people are in touch with a power that is not of human origin."

"Joe, you're as bad as the others; there you are, getting off into the supernatural; you fellows make me tired."

"No, Alex, not supernatural. Everything is natural, but I would say that some of the power exerted was most decidedly superhuman."

The razor began to pass smoothly and rapidly over my face; and my barber, with the other occupants of the room, lapsed into silence, and each mind continued to consider the subject from its own standpoint. When my toilet was completed, my friend, the barber, touched my shoulder, facing me towards the gray-haired gentleman. "Let me make you acquainted with Uncle Jack Redmond." Then, turning to his uncle, "My friend, Mr. Worthy, and my worthy friend."

"Alex has often spoken of you," I remarked, as we shook hands. "In fact, I feel as if we were old acquaintances, and if Alex doesn't accept your invitation to to-morrow's meeting, I would be glad

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to take his place, if it will not inconvenience you."

"Not in the least. I would be happy to extend the invitation to you also," was his reply.

"Well, if you want to go, Joe, I'm in on this, too," said Alex. "I guess I can stand it if you can." And so it was arranged that I should meet them at Alex's home on the following evening, and accompany them to the meeting; and after a short conversation with Mr. Redmond I took my departure and, as I closed the door, Alex shouted as a parting shot, "You'll have to prepare to fight the spooks tomorrow night, Joe." "I guess that won't be hard to do," I fired back.

At the appointed time I strolled around to Alex Redmond's house, beautifully situated in the shelter of a natural bluff of poplar trees; a grassy lawn and well-kept flower-beds fronted the house, conveying to me the idea that here was a home of rest and comfort.

As I turned in at the gate I saw that the occupants of this home, together with the gray-haired Uncle Jack, were seated on lawn chairs, apparently in deep conversation. Mrs. Redmond (with whom I was well acquainted) placed a chair for me in their midst, and after explaining to me the subject of conversation, they continued the discussion.

"No man," went on Alex, "has ever been able to produce one iota of proof to me or anybody else that there is any such being as God."

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"Did you ever prove or did anybody ever prove that there is not a God?" asked Mr. Redmond.

"No," replied Alex, "no atheist is fool enough to try such a thing. There is no actual proof on either side, and I think it is up to the parties asserting His existence to put up the proof or withdraw the assertion."

"I think if that's your stand," said Mr. Redmond, "that you should tag yourself agnostic (I don't know), rather than atheist."

"Perhaps so, but it is a distinction without a difference. If I don't know a God then there is no God for me."

"Right you are," replied Mr. Redmond, without hesitation, "and if, on the other hand, one does know a God then there must be a God for him."

"But where is the evidence?" said Alex impatiently. "The old world rolls along in the same old way. Children are born and death still cuts them down in their youth. And just about the time a man becomes of some value on account of his knowledge, he also returns to his original elements, while the best part of him, his thought, can, by an invention of man, be preserved on paper. Therefore men follow their first instinct and fight for life and the necessities of life the same as they did before the advent of Christianity. Show me one man who has come back to tell what is after death. You can't do it, Uncle Jack."

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Mr. Redmond raised his head slowly in mild re-proof of Alex's reckless words and, after a moment, said, "You had a father once, Alex; perhaps to-night you will have the opportunity of talking with him, and then you will be convinced."

But at this I ventured to declare to Mr. Redmond my unbelief in the power of the dead to appear unto men, and I explained that it was my opinion that the apparent manifestation of the dead through spirit mediumship was, probably, a personation of the dead, by the evil, or fallen angels. I asked him if he thought the influence of the spirits was productive of good. "Not always," he replied. "There are evil spirits as well as those of good character; in fact, it is reasonable to expect a great variety of characters among the spirits, as each is the personality of some individual who has formerly dwelt in the flesh. And as, in that world, there is but a gradual progression towards good, it must follow that some are further advanced than others. Consequently we are warned that we should try the spirits to see if they be of God."

"And what is your manner of testing them?" I inquired.

"By the morals they suggest to man," was the reply. "And we cannot be too particular as to the liberties we grant to these spiritual visitors."

"But, Mr. Redmond," I interrupted, "if that is the case, I can't see what benefit spirit intercourse would

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be to man: because a good man alone would encourage the communion of good spirits and an evil man would select evil spirits for the companions of his thoughts, and does not the Good Book declare that evil spirits corrupt good manners and appear as angels of light that they may the more easily deceive the unwary? Indeed, it declares that the deception will become so plausible, near the close of this age, that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect."

"I know it does," answered Mr. Redmond, "and, as I said before, some are very dangerous and therefore we must exercise great caution."

"But what good, may I ask, do you receive from such intercourse, which cannot be gained by a personal communion with the revealed spirit of Jesus Christ? If the influence on man for good is proportionate with the development of the spirit, then will not the contact of the purest spirit produce the best results upon the character of mankind?"

"Most certainly, and I do not wish to in any way deprecate the work of the holy spirit in the heart of man. But we find that our dead friends take more vital interest in our personal affairs, and then again, our conversation with them direct tends to strengthen our faith in a future life for ourselves."

"I have that faith now," I replied. "I feel the spiritual life within my mind and it causes me to love righteousness and to hate iniquity and there-

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fore to loathe any contact with these spirits, for I believe they are the angels which fell from their holy estate on account of their lust for the daughters of men in antediluvian days. Their bodies of flesh, through which they experienced those lustful sensations, being destroyed in the great Flood, they have since desired to possess the bodies of men and women as a medium of sensation. You see, Mr. Redmond," I continued, "these spirits cannot be the spirits of those gone before, as you say, because the Good Book says that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and again, it declares that the dead know not anything, their love and their hatred perished at death, 'For there is no knowledge in the grave whither thou goest.' "

"That's a new idea about the angels, Joe, I never heard you get that off before," broke in Alex, "and then they always told me that a fellow would go straight to Heaven or Hell."

"Well, Alex," I replied, "I believe it is pretty near time for new ideas to arrive in this world and priests and parsons have no copyright on them, either. This last one hundred years or more, new ideas have been arriving as never before." "On account of wonderful brain development!" put in Alex.

"No," I replied. "That can't be it, as the unearthing of ancient cities and ruins, the Egyptian pyramids, etc., proves that the brain capacity of ancient man was as great as ours at this enlightened

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day. It is my idea that this modern knowledge has been granted to mankind so as to prepare the world for a new order of society, simply because the time had come in the plan of the Infinite."

"Hold on," interrupted Alex. "I have you now, for as you speak of the plan of the Infinite you evidently think your Infinite has been working along a definite plan from the beginning, and if so, why did He allow His plans to be frustrated by the introduction of sin by one of His own creatures? He evidently couldn't help Himself or else He didn't know any better, and that's your Infinite God for you! No, Joe, if there is a God He should write it across the sky so that all could see. He should not have left this world in pain and ignorance all these generations—countless millions suffering, dying, and the preacher adding insult to injury by telling us that this loving, merciful God of his prepared a Hell of endless torments for all us poor duffers who can't love Him when we would despise any man who would mete out such treatment to his dog. No, friends, even if there is a God, I couldn't love Him because in His character I see nothing of a lovable nature. My happiness in life would be destroyed by the knowledge of His existence."

I was not surprised or shocked by Alex's speech, for, when a mere lad, I had thought of the very same things and I suppose every thinking mind must be somewhat similarly affected at times. It is evident

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that such reasoning is based on the supposition that God could have created us in a hundred different ways; that He could create worlds in a moment and have everything perfected in the twinkling of an eye. I early learned that God was limited—not in power, but in matter of time. In other words, He could not make a race of people with centuries of experience in one minute. He could not make a universe so large that He could not govern it. But, as everything that is, is but the effect of something that has gone before, it is evident that the first effects must have been caused by His direct action; so, therefore, things as they have been, and as they are to-day, are the only way they could possibly have been, taking into consideration the passing of time. And thus it will be easily seen that the future of social conditions is wrapped up in the ideal held by people of to-day, and every honest effort to raise those ideals will the more quickly lead to the establishment of justice in the earth.

The possibility of right and wrong action must appear before every thinking mind; and, once presented, there must necessarily be a choice of action. That choice is determined by observing apparent results of our actions, and, reasoning from these consequences, we arrange a code of actions we call morals, because, in the circumstances in which we are placed, those actions we decide to be productive of good, first to ourselves, then to

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our children and our nation, and all mankind. But as all material development results in great social changes, we are compelled constantly to change our code of morals, so that we may experience the best personal development. I believe it to be the purpose of God to thus develop the whole race by an experience of evil consequences, so that the will of man will choose the right for the sake of self-preservation in a world where all the natural conditions are conducive to that end. And when man realizes that all the laws of nature have been working for his ultimate good, he will cry out in a spirit of praise and thankfulness, "Alleluia, Salvation, and Glory and Honor and Power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are Thy judgments."

I expressed the above views at some length.

"In other words," said Mrs. Redmond, "it is your idea that when we know more of material law, our reasons will, as it were, justify God in His apparent delay in perfecting what you call His plan?" "Yes, you catch the idea. We know that our knowledge is very limited; or, as Paul put it, 'Now we see as through a glass, darkly. But then, face to face.'"

Mr. Redmond, looking at his watch, announced that it was time we were departing for the meeting, and, as so many conversations come to an end, so did ours, without reaching any common ground in connection with the subject discussed.

On our way we walked silently, each of us seem-

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ing occupied in turning over the subject of discussion in his own mind, and as it was not far to the house of meeting we were soon seated in the presence of other members of the faith and curious visitors like Alex and myself.

Presently the soft strains of subdued music from the strings of a harp floated through the room and seemed to become for a brief moment suspended in the air, thus causing my nerves to feel at rest, soothed me to almost mental slumber, such as I had at times felt in my dreams; and then I experienced a sensation as though I were floating through the atmosphere. Alex sat as silent as the rest of us and no doubt experienced the same restful sensations, and thus far I felt it was good to be there.

We had been seated thus some twenty minutes or more, when a young lady arose, and in a low sweet voice that thrilled me through and through, inquired if any present wished to communicate with a departed friend. "This evening," she continued, "we have a visiting brother with us, and should he wish to avail himself of this opportunity, he is at perfect liberty, as I will be pleased to convey his wishes to his spirit friend."

The lady was tall and graceful, having large hazel eyes which seemed to move from place to place in a deliberate manner, that to me denoted a well-balanced mind. And my heart went out in pity to her, that a lady of her evident ability and culture

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should be deceived by those lying spirits, and there and then I raised a prayer that she might be saved from their evil influence.

Mr. Redmond, speaking in a low monotone, asked to be allowed to hold converse with his dead brother, William Redmond. I glanced towards Alex and saw his mouth twitch and then an incredulous smile overspread his face. I saw that Mr. Redmond was also watching him intently, but Alex's gaze was riveted upon the lady as though attempting to detect some trick or fraud. My eyes followed his gaze and I saw that the lady seemed entering a trance. Those eyes, so beautiful a moment before, had taken on a stony stare. The muscles of the face were drawn and white as though the messengers of death were hovering near; and I knew that the lady had become the medium through which one of the fallen angels might deceive mankind. Was not this the same art as practiced by the witches of all ages, and did not the witch of Endor communicate with a spirit who attempted to personate Samuel, and thus deceive Saul, the King of Israel?

The lady now began to murmur and mutter something which no one could understand; and then Mr. Redmond asked in the same solemn monotone, what she saw? Then speaking clearly and distinctly again, she answered, "I see a gentleman about fifty years of age, with dark hair and beard, but no mustache. He appears still in the prime of life. He is strug-

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gling in the water. Another is trying to rescue him. It is his son, but oh, he sinks beneath the wave! He is gone. His son battles hard with the waters, but at last he gives up, and, almost exhausted, swims back to the shore. I see now the spirit of the father rising above the waters, triumphant. He is speaking." "What does he say?" asked Mr. Redmond, in a voice trembling with emotion. "He says, 'I am safe. Tell my son that I saw his effort to rescue me from death, but tell him it is better thus. Tell him that I will watch over him until he also is called to this blessed land of spirits. Tell him that now I know that all is Spirit, and death is but an entrance into life. To my brother I send a message of love, and I ask that he instruct my son in the mysteries of the spirit condition.' "

My eyes were again resting upon Alex and I could plainly see that he was much affected by the description and message, for his father had been drowned before his eyes. In fact, he had sunk out of sight while he was attempting his rescue, and Alex's mother had persisted in a statement that she had seen him sink in the water, though she was miles distant at the time of the accident.

Again Mr. Redmond spoke, "Tell him that there is one present to-night who does not believe that the spirit speaking is the soul of my dead brother, but is a lying spirit and one of the fallen angels attempting to impersonate my brother." The lady's eyes

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closed and all was again quiet as though she were delivering this message. Then standing up and speaking out clearly as though her identity had been captivated by that of the spirit, she cast her eyes directly upon me and commanded that the unbeliever must depart hence, as he desired to restrain us before our time. A mist passed before my eyes and I stood up facing the lady, and for a brief moment was unable to utter a word. But I then began in a voice of calm assurance which surprised me. I said, "Deny it you dare not. Thou art a seducing spirit seeking a habitation in the body of this lady to deceive her and others." At that moment I myself felt possessed, but with the spirit of power and authority, and I continued in a commanding voice, "I tell you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to depart from this woman!" and when I had finished these words the lady relaxed and sank in a heap upon the floor. I tenderly lifted her limp form, and placing her upon a couch I passed out of the house, beckoning to Alex to follow me, which he did; but ere I closed the door of that room I caught a glance from those beautiful eyes which seemed to plead with me not to leave her, and at the same time opened a new world to my mental gaze. I felt like returning to her side and assuring her of my pity and love, but I resisted the impulse, and, turning, followed Alex, who had passed me as I gazed. As we walked towards his home silence sealed our lips until we arrived at his gate and I

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said good-night to him, and started upon my way.

"No," said he, "come on in, Joe. It is not late and we have lots to talk about," and I gladly acceded to his wish. Soon we were in the parlor, narrating to Mrs. Redmond the peculiar events of the evening and she was listening with rapt attention. "It's a stunner," declared Alex. "You say, Joe, it's the devil, but I'd as soon believe in God as the Devil. If there are spirits at all there must be one who bossed the whole bunch, and if so, I suppose he would be a God. If each spirit was its own boss it would be anarchy, eternal war, and we poor dupes would have the devil to pay." "I expect he will be paid good and plenty for all the trouble he has caused humanity," I remarked.

"I feel sorry for the poor fellow when pay-day comes. Perhaps he'll strike," said Alex with a laugh. "No," I replied, "it will be more like a lock-out, for you see the works will be closed down." "And the workers of iniquity will have a devil of a time while out of employment, as it were," went on Alex, laughing again. "Yes, out of employment for a thousand years," I replied, "and the walking boss tightly bound in chains."

"I hope you are right, Joe, so I do, if any benefit is coming to us, but I feel now as though I were between the devil and the deep sea." He had arisen and was now pacing the floor, and for a few minutes

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all were silent. Then, slapping his hand heavily on the table, startling Mrs. Redmond and myself, he almost shouted, "Joe, if you are right, to hell with the devil and his angels, but show me your God." "Sit down here then, Alex, and let us reason together. I will give you my proofs, refute them if you can." "If they are real proofs I don't want to refute them. It is proofs that I have been looking for all my life but have never been able to find them. I have listened to some of the most celebrated preachers discourse on the subject of God's existence and attributes but their logic seemed to me like a man trying to lift himself by his boot-tops. They assumed His Existence or demanded who else could have created the universe? 'The existence of God and the Immortality of the soul, must be conceded,' said one, 'or we overthrow the whole Christian philosophy,' and as I considered it simply preposterous to assume such a stupendous proposition, the whole Christian philosophy was overthrown as far as I was concerned."

"The true scientific mind," I said, "does not accept a statement as final until there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate it as a fact but when the evidence is produced it must be accepted or else the mind becomes impaired; and then if such a course is continued it would finally be impossible for the intellect to decide any question in a logical manner."

"There are very few men or women living who

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will be governed in their religious beliefs by those rules," said Mrs. Redmond.

"And there are very few who act in accordance with their professed beliefs," put in Alex. "And that is because their beliefs are not founded upon facts or logically deduced," I replied. "But to return to our subject: The existence of a supreme intelligent being we call God. I am ready to give you some of my proofs and I believe both of you will honestly weigh and consider them." "We certainly will," declared Alex. "We have no desire to dwell in darkness if you can show us the light."

"Well, to begin with, I will base my proposition on a fact which, to deny, would be to deny our own existence. First, then, you will admit that what we call the earth is a mass of material inhabited by a multitude of sensate beings; that the highest of these beings possess wonderful powers of thought." I hesitated that my listeners might take in my full meaning and give their assent. But as they spoke not, I asked, "you will admit my proposition, will you not?" "Most certainly," replied Alex, "proceed." "Well," I continued, "you will also admit that there must have been a time when such things did not exist, a time in fact when this world was not yet formed." "Nothing is more certain," said Alex, "but the substance out of which all things were formed must have always existed in some other form, for something cannot be made out of nothing." "Grant-

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ed," said I, "and as there was a time when this world took form there must also have been a time when all the worlds, suns, and stars were formed."

"Granted again."

"Well, then, there must have been a time before any of the heavenly bodies were formed." "Could it not always have been turning over and over, new worlds forming out of the old ones?" asked Mrs. Redmond.

"The human mind cannot accept such a theorem," I replied. "For, if we settle our minds upon a point of time one hundred billion years ago and find such a process in action, we still must realize that those bodies were formed by the process of natural law, because time was occupied in their formation. Is that not plain?" "Yes," answered Mrs. Redmond, "I see that you are correct in your reasoning, if such things can be brought within the bounds of our conception."

"If we cannot depend upon our reason here, why should we depend upon it at all?" I asked.

"So far your reasoning is correct," admitted Alex. "What is your next step?" "It is this," I replied. "That as there was a time when no heavenly bodies were in existence and as the material out of which all bodies were made has always been in existence, it therefore follows that all matter must have existed in its original form; or, in other words, it existed as the molecule, the unit of matter. Then, again, it

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follows as surely, that these molecules were at rest or in perfect balance one with the other."

"There certainly must have been a time when all matter was in the position you state. The mind cannot draw any other logical deductions," declared Alex.

"Then here is another proposition you will admit,—the potentiality of all that is, must have been contained in the material and energy composing the mass."

"Yes, proceed."

"Well, now, here is where it becomes absolutely necessary to conclude that, as these atoms possessed no power of motion themselves, something outside of themselves must have been the cause of action, and my explanation is, that *intellect* permeated the energy existing between the molecules, and thus controlled them. The same intellect must still exist to-day, wherever the energy of life has gathered together a material body, and this material, this energy, of life and intellect, is my omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God, in whom we and all things live, move, and have our being."

While I was talking, Alex had seated himself at the table. His chin was now resting in the palm of his right hand, his elbow on the table; his honest soul seemed full to overflowing, his lips slightly parted, and deep thought had settled upon his brow. The ideas I had given him were at war with some

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preconceived or preaccepted ideas, and the end was not yet.

For several minutes the war of facts went on in that mind, and during the conflict, as I watched his face, I developed a love for him the like of which I had not felt before. I felt that could he once grasp this fundamental truth, my spirit could greet his in a great brotherly love with possibilities of eternal endurance. In fact, it would be the transformation of a human soul from the darkness of doubt into the spirit life, with the consequent enjoyment of spirit love.

He slowly raised his eyes until they met mine, and with trembling lips he said, "Joe, your logic seems absolutely irrefutable," and again lapsed into a silence I did not wish to break, his eyes resting upon an imaginary object on the table.

Mrs. Redmond arose from her seat and advancing to his side gently placed her right arm around her husband's neck and with the left, lovingly smoothed the hair back from his moistened brow. He raised his eyes again until they met hers; then they softened, and in that gaze I saw that the man was proud of the woman and wife who could comprehend even as he could comprehend; a wife who had shared his doubts and unbeliefs—perhaps tremblingly at times, as she thought of the teachings of her mother—but nevertheless with an outward confidence that betokened her faith in the powers of his intellect. For if

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"man trusts in God, He is eternal. Woman trusts in man and he is shifting sand." The waters of truth seemed to have shifted some of the sand, but the trust was still manifest in the eyes of the woman.

And who would have it otherwise? For man was endowed with the powers of reason predominating in his make-up. Woman was endowed with the ability to love as the predominating instinct. The man accepts and enjoys her love; the woman accepts and enjoys his reasoning; and united they become wise.

I felt that here silence was golden, so decided to depart, and bidding them good night I passed out into the darkness, after making a promise to Mrs. Redmond to call again when I could make it convenient.

I hastened home to my apartments and to my bed, and in my dreams that night I was fighting with evil spirits for the lady who had acted as medium at the meeting the evening before. Then again the scene would change and Alex Redmond and his wife were wading in deep water and I was calling to them and pointing out a landing place along the rocky coast.

THE TRAGEDY AND CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRAGEDY AND CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE AND THE
TWO LADIES WHO DISTURBED MY MIND.

A FEW days after the stirring events occurring at the spiritualists' meeting, a well-dressed heavily-veiled lady entered my office and inquired of my assistant for Mr. Worthy, giving her name as Miss Smith.

Upon hearing her name my heart began to beat faster, for by this time I had discovered that Miss Smith was the name of the spirit medium and I at once jumped to the conclusion that she had come to take me to task and demand an apology for what now seemed to me my rashness at the meeting, in commanding an evil spirit to depart from her. But I must brave it out, so, though trembling from head to foot, I had the lady shown to my private office.

As she entered, she raised her veil, and I saw that I was not mistaken in her identity, for again I looked into those liquid hazel eyes, and, realizing their frankness and purity, I condemned myself again, for who was I, in this age of the world, to assume to command the demons in this way?

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I arose and bowed to her in welcome, but didn't dare to speak. I drew up a chair and asked her to be seated. "I have called, Mr. Worthy, not on any legal business," she began, as she took the chair I had placed for her. "I have called in connection with your statements at our meeting the other evening."

I felt that I was cornered, and moved uneasily in my chair. I was embarrassed and, upon the spur of the moment, I couldn't frame any words in reply. My glance was fixed on the point of my pen which I held in my hand, and those few moments of suspense seemed very awkward indeed, for I felt the gaze of those beautiful eyes full upon me, pouring out their contempt and reproach. But the lady's next words reassured me, and I looked up and met that gaze, finding in it no contempt and no reproach. She had not come to accuse me of any impropriety, but as a seeker of more light.

"I desire to understand your ideas upon the subject of spirit communication and what you term the personation of the dead by the spirits of fallen angels. I understood that to be your belief from your statements the other night."

"I will be very glad to explain my position, Miss Smith, and I hope you will understand that my action the other evening at the meeting, was impulsive, performed on account of my love for truth. You may think it strange, Miss Smith, but the contact of that evil spirit seemed so real and actual to me that for a

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few moments I forgot the presence of any other person, and then I felt that I was battling for your soul and for the soul of Alex Redmond." I explained to her the attitude of mind my friend was in that night, before and after the meeting, and she returned my confidence with an account of her own mental difficulties since then.

During late years she had seen and experienced so many wonderful manifestations of Spirit power that she was certain it was of superhuman origin; but she had never before heard any one suggest the possibility of the fallen angels being the source of that power. Since the events of that meeting, however, her mind kept reverting to the subject and the voice of her judgment kept saying, "he is right, it is so." And then her memory would recall some incident of her experience and declare, "That is the true and only explanation."

I explained to her the terrible snare which had been cast over Christendom by the false teaching of the natural immortality of the human soul. How Satan had used that first lie when tempting the first woman. "For he declared ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods (angels) knowing good and evil."

I pointed out to her that the Word declared that immortality was a gift of God granted to a few overcomers, that they might be kings and priests unto

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God and assist in the uplift of all the human family during the thousand-year reign of Christ, at which time these same overcomers should pass judgment even upon those angels which left their own habitation, going after strange flesh: and their restoration was not only possible but most probable.

My words seemed to bring rest and comfort to her weary, wandering soul, and the thought that I was permitted to comfort her gave me a thrill of spiritual joy. Thus, when she at last arose to take her departure, I made bold and asked permission to call upon her, when we could continue the discussion of this most interesting subject. And she frankly assured me that she would be pleased to become better acquainted with me and my ideas regarding spirit phenomena and religion.

The rest of that day my thoughts kept turning to her even in the midst of conversation upon legal matters. I remembered that previous to the shooting of Jim Roland, Dame Rumor had connected her name with his, and that since his death she had lived a very quiet life, paying strict attention to her duties as teacher in our public school, lodging with Mrs. Johnston, a widowed lady with whom I was slightly acquainted.

Thus far in my narrative I have made no direct statement as to my own profession, but now the truth must be told. But I do not speak thus because I am in the least ashamed of my profession, for,

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under the present form of society, it is as noble a calling as a young man can follow. I am a lawyer. Yes, and I am trained in all the established methods of quibbling by the gradual and plausible introduction of a supposition, and then upon that foundation to construct by sound logic and intricate reasoning the structure I wish the jurymen to see.

By this method I have often been able to convince a jury, and perhaps the reader will be surprised to learn that my conscience has never troubled me in the least on this account, because the law of our land grants to the accused criminal the right of defence. It thus becomes the duty of the defending counsel to protect society from unsubstantiated testimony brought against its members. On the other hand, it is the duty of the prosecuting counsel to protect society by producing valid proof of crime committed.

Although I will admit that the insane belief in the rights of property instead of the rights of man, in many cases tends to the creation of the criminal class (or, as some one has called them, the caught class), still, society must provide punishment for the transgressor, if it would continue to uphold its authority over the individual, for the prevention of crime.

Some months prior to this, Jim Roland, of whom I have previously made mention, had been murdered, while plowing on his own farm, which was situated only a few miles from our village. He had been

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a sober, industrious man, was about forty years of age, and had come west from Ontario and taken a homestead when this region was being settled.

He had fought the ups and downs of pioneer life on the prairie alone, declaring that he would not ask any girl to share with him the hardships which the pioneer of the West must put up with; but success had at last been attained, and his ambitions were still strong, for the future looked bright indeed, though forty winters had succeeded in whitening a few stray hairs.

Shortly before his death he had completed a new house in the place of his bachelor shack, and rumor had spoken of our school-teacher as mistress of the new home.

The circumstances of his death were the cause of some excitement in our midst, especially as suspicion rested upon a near neighbor, and the evidence seemed to point to his guilt.

The story of the suspected man was, that he had gone to Roland's house about dusk, and found his horses still hitched to a sulky gang plow and standing at the stable door. Suspecting something wrong, he quickly unhitched the horses, tied them in the stable, and then hurried to the field where he knew Jim had been plowing that afternoon. As the plow had not been lifted out of the ground at the end of the furrow it had, in many places, gouged into the sod and turned two wide furrows,

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only to rise out again when coming to the hard-packed trail to the field. By this circumstance Fred Ray concluded that Jim must have met with some accident, perhaps at the other end of the long furrow. So he increased his pace to a trot, hoping to be of some service to his neighbor, with whom he had not always been on the best of terms.

Darkness was fast settling down over the prairie and the searcher hastened on until he at last came to the object of his search, lying in the newly turned furrow. He raised his head and spoke to him, but there was no response, and to his horror he found that his hand was covered with blood. He struck a match and saw by the flickering light that a wound like a bullet hole appeared on Jim's forehead. He placed his hand over Jim's heart, but there was no sign of life. He instantly decided to go for lights and assistance, so the body was left lying on the black soil which drank in the life blood of Jim Roland, while Fred Ray hastened by a short cut across the prairie to the gleaming light of a neighboring farm-house where he knew he could count on the assistance of two men to help remove the body to the house.

Both men were shocked at the news Fred brought them and advised that the body should be left where it was, a doctor called, and the mounted police at Scale River immediately notified: and in another minute one of them had saddled his horse and dis-

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appeared in the darkness. The other man procured a light and together with young Ray made his way across the fields and prairie to the scene of the tragedy, discussing as they went, any possible clue to the solution of the mystery.

"The whole business looks bad for you, Fred," suggested the unthinking neighbor, after an inspection of the wound in the head of the victim. "Me!" gasped Fred in surprise. "Goodness, man, I didn't do it!" "No, I didn't say you did it. I only said it looked bad for you, Fred. And how can you clear yourself?" "Clear myself, man! what do you mean? Do you think that if I had done this deed, I would have gone over and told you fellows?" "Well," he replied, "it is possible for a man to do even that so as to cover his tracks the better." So Fred Ray relapsed into silence and each occupied with his own thoughts, sat there on the stubble edge of the furrow until the arrival of the mounted policeman and the doctor. The doctor stated that the bullet had passed through the brain and death was instantaneous. After making careful note of surroundings and marking the spot, they removed the body to the house, Fred narrating to them how he had found the horses and then the body. The stable and horses were then inspected and the doctor discovered a wound in the hip of the furrow horse, which, upon further investigation, was pronounced a bullet wound. And later the bullet itself was dis-

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covered lodged between the left pelvic bones of the animal.

The finding of the bullet in the furrow horse clearly indicated that Jim Roland met his death by a bullet discharged from a rifle of thirty-two caliber in the hands of some unknown person behind him, and this was the finding of the jury.

For several days after the funeral all seemed quiet in official circles, but everybody was discussing the terrible affair. Some said that Roland and Ray had, upon several occasions, had violent quarrels, and everybody knew that Ray possessed a thirty-two caliber rifle. So none of us were very much surprised when Ray was placed under arrest charged with the crime, and I was at once retained for his defence. I firmly believed in his innocence, and threw my whole energy into his defence, determined, if possible, to clear him of the charge. At the preliminary examination the magistrates committed him to stand his trial at Regina, so he was now detained in the jail in that city.

I clearly understood the importance of my work, for a life hung in the balance; and the circumstances were not only strongly against us, but the lack of any alternate theory seemed to lend strength to the one hit upon. The idea had sometimes come to me that the deed might have been done by some jealous rival of Roland, for I well understood that where crime was committed there was usually a woman in

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the case somewhere. But I was unable to work out any satisfactory theory because rumor had never recorded that Jim Roland had ever had a rival in his suit of Miss Smith. In fact, there was nothing to prove even that Roland had been successful in his suit. But the reader will easily understand why my interest in Miss Smith increased after the morning of her visit to my office, and why I took advantage of the first and every opportunity to win her friendship and confidence. If at that time I had any other motive I was not aware of it.

The weeks had lengthened into months, and the long winter was at last nearing its finish, as the sun each day rose higher and higher above the southern horizon and ever and anon the gentle south wind warned Jack Frost that the time of his dominion was fast drawing to a close. The glorious Aurora danced in the northern sky, sweeping the folds of her many-colored skirts around the great Bear; then, rising to magnificent height, outshone the light of Polaris. All the while, was whispering of warmer days near at hand, when the drifts of winter's snows would melt and pour their imprisoned waters into the swelling streams hastening on towards the ocean.

Although the breath of coming spring was welcome after the unusually long and severe winter, still, the thoughts of the long evenings carried with them happy memories. I had long ago introduced Miss Smith to Mr. and Mrs. Redmond, and many

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a pleasant evening had we four spent together at Alex's home. And now we were all awaiting the arrival of Miss Bliss, who was coming for a prolonged visit with her sister, Mrs. Redmond; her mother, with whom she resided in Winnipeg, intending to spend the summer with a brother in Eastern Canada.

I had long ere this come to the conclusion that in Fred Ray's defence I must, if possible, discover a motive for some other party associated with the murder of Jim Roland, and, though I was no detective, I decided to act in that capacity in this case so as to further the interests of my client.

If any plausible theory could be woven together which would account for the known circumstances, it would largely detract from the value of purely circumstantial proof against poor Ray, and I concluded that this would be my line of defence.

In my imagination I pictured the real culprit as an old lover of Miss Smith's. Then I accepted as true the rumor of that lady's engagement to Jim Roland, and, as the unknown had, therefore, been jilted, he had sought his revenge in this manner.

Upon this supposed foundation I reared other structures of fancy, at times even thinking of the lady herself as the perpetrator of the crime. But this latter fancy faded and passed away the more I learned of her character and aspirations.

No, the murderer was without a doubt a man, and I had allowed my mind so often to dwell upon his per-

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sonality that he now seemed to me to be real flesh and blood and his very appearance seemed in some mysterious manner to have taken form in my mind.

I had several times mentioned the charge against young Ray in Miss Smith's presence, but she had volunteered no information beyond the fact that she had been well acquainted with the murdered man.

"You have no idea" (I had ventured), "of any man who might have possessed a grudge against him?"

"No," she answered. "At least not in this country." I noted the qualifying remark and considered it worth retaining in my memory.

Several months had now passed since my experience at the spiritualists' meeting and Miss Smith's visit to my office, during which time I had discussed many religious and social ideas with Alex, Mrs. Redmond and Miss Smith. Thus becoming conversant with my views on spirit phenomena the latter had entirely absented herself from the meetings of the cult and for her present state of mind I was held responsible by her former friends.

Alex and Mrs. Redmond had undergone a mental revolution, but they were not yet sufficiently convinced to make any specific statement as to a change of faith. However, as time went on I easily discerned a changed attitude towards my ideas of Christianity. I noticed that they looked at everything from a different angle. With Alex, the habit of years of criticism still clung and sometimes I heard him

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expressing sentiments which I was sure he had long ago discarded, because he never used them any more to back up an argument when in conversation with me. But I noticed the change more in the tone of voice when speaking of religion. The sneer was gone from voice and lip and no more was the speech that of the scoffer. The Saviour of the world, socially, had taken the place in their minds of the Saviour of a few individuals from the dogmatic hell of torment. And the change of this basic idea was having its effect upon their minds.

I had been thinking of these changes one evening after a hard day's work at my desk. My mind had been going over again for the fiftieth time that day the conversations during the past winter while visiting at the Redmonds'. Then I would think of Miss Smith and the Roland murder, and I felt perplexed and weary. So I proposed to myself a skate on the newly-formed river ice and, on the impulse, I sprang to my feet and reaching for my hat I was soon walking towards the river with my skates over my arm. My path led me past the railroad station and I noticed that the evening express was just pulling out around the curve. A couple were walking toward me, and as they came nearer I discovered that the gentleman was Alex Redmond. The lady is no doubt his expected sister-in-law, I thought. In another moment we had met, and Alex had introduced me to Miss Bliss, the expected visitor.

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"I hope you will enjoy your visit and like our town and people," I remarked. "It is very pretty here in the summer months."

"I would judge as much by the present appearance of those wooded banks yonder," she replied, waving her hand to the south. "I think it is beautiful even now."

I passed on, telling Alex I would see him in his shop in the evening, and once I glanced back and saw the tall graceful figure of the girl as she walked at Alex's side. And the Fates seemed to whisper something in my ear that I could not then understand.

I was soon gliding over the new ice formed on the overflow, and as I drew in the fresh spring-like air I thought again of the girl. I wondered what were her ideals. Would they harmonize with those of Alex Redmond and his accomplished wife or would they strike a discordant note?

The questions of my mind were sooner answered than I had expected, for, when calling for my shave upon my return, Alex discoursed, as he took the lather-brush in hand and barber-like, when the lather began to hide the expression of my face, with its foaming whiteness, his tongue loosened and his thoughts began to flow into expressed words.

I have always been glad to converse with my barber while I am being shaved, as he does not under the circumstances expect me to do much of the talking. I am aware that some men don't like to take

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part in such a one-sided conversation, but I have always been different from other men in almost everything and I have the right to be so in this. But on the present occasion I enjoyed it more than usual, as the conversation was the answer to my recent thoughts.

"Now I'll catch the devil," he began, with a kind of I-don't-care-if-I-do laugh. "Vickie's a great girl, Methodist to the core. I don't know what she'll think when she finds out that Alice has gone back on superstition. We thought it just as well that Vickie and her mother be left in blissful ignorance, to sing hymns and pray as generations had done before them, but now that she has come Alice will consider it her duty to inform her of her changed attitude of mind. Of course they were aware of my views before Alice and I were married, and I can tell you they hadn't much use for me."

The lather had now disappeared from my face and so had the black stubs of my beard and mustache, and my skin felt as smooth as a child's. I arose from the chair, and as I reached for my hat I said. "Well, Alex, don't be too hard on Miss Bliss. Hymns and prayers never hurt anybody and they certainly have been a wonderful comfort to thousands in times gone by, and will be yet to thousands more."

"No use here," replied Alex, lightly tapping his forehead with his finger. "They have been used

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by priests for ages to bind all kinds of burdens upon the people, to uphold kings in their foolish claim of divine right. With hymns and prayers they have lulled the stupid masses into believing that they must be contented with their lot, and while thus helping to perpetuate a hell of misery on earth they sing of a heaven over there where all are made happy by gazing on the misery of those they choose to call the damned. The rich can be sure of an entrance into this heaven by a liberal subscription to the church funds and the poor by giving of their pennies and meekly allowing the rich to continue their system of robbery. No, Joe, if in your heaven I had to mix with such a lot of hypocrites I'd rather be excused, because I know it would be no pleasant place for me."

"Don't call it my heaven," I replied. "None but the pure in heart can see or love God. All others must pass through trials to be purified and made fit to be companions one with another on this beautiful earth. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth."

"Well, if the kingdom will make things better on this earth, then I say bring it along—the sooner the better. We've tried nearly everything else in the idea of Government and it is all a miserable farce, and I've come to the conclusion that there is no man good enough or wise enough to rule another man."

"He's a great Alex," I thought, as I walked along

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towards my boarding-house. "What a power he would be if he could see the truth," and I at that moment experienced a fervent desire that his mental eyes might see what mine had seen, that he might feel the glory in his soul that I had felt: and the thought came to me, he will, in the proper time.

From the barber-shop I went direct to Mrs. Johnston's and rang the bell, and the lady herself opened the door. I inquired if Miss Smith was in. "Yes, just step in and be seated, Mr. Worthy, and I will call Sarah," and while I sat there waiting I said to myself, "Where have I heard that name before?" and then, I remembered that it was at least ten years before. Just then Miss Smith entered the room and I arose to greet her.

"I didn't know that your name was Sarah until just now, when Mrs. Johnston said she would call Sarah, and then I remembered that Sarah Smith was a familiar name to me." "You knew some one of that name, did you?" she asked. "No, I never knew the lady, never even met her, but I knew of her. I have often wished I had met her. The circumstances under which I came to know of her were rather peculiar." "You must tell me about her," she declared, in a most charming voice.

"It was an interesting experience," I continued. "a study in mental telepathy. I have never been able to explain it to my own satisfaction. Perhaps you may be able to throw some light on the subject.

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It was a letter written by a namesake of yours residing at Windsor, Ontario."

"At Windsor!" she exclaimed. "Why, that is my home!"

"Well," I continued, "that is another coincidence; but it is impossible that you are the same Sarah Smith because, you see, this incident occurred fully ten or twelve years ago, when you would have been quite a girl. And the Sarah Smith I speak of was at that time a school-teacher holding a second-class certificate, and had had some experience teaching in Ontario. I remember the circumstances so well.

"You see, at the time, my father was a school trustee and the board had instructed the secretary to advertise in a Winnipeg paper for a teacher for our school. And in a short time several applications were received, and from among them Miss Sarah Smith's was accepted. The lady was notified by wire to come immediately and the following day an answer came, 'Can't accept. Already engaged.' So another teacher was engaged by the school board, and this is where I began to take an interest in school matters. I had heard the circumstances discussed at my father's house, where the new teacher was expected to lodge, it being close to the school; but at this time an elder brother and I were working a farm a few miles distant and I was only an occasional visitor at home.

"When a mere boy my father called me 'Joseph,

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the dreamer,' and my brother had kept up the title to tease me, but I paid no attention to his banter and kept on dreaming whenever it suited me. And sometimes I would tell my dream, when it appeared to convey some good omen or illustrate some advanced idea.

"Upon this occasion the dream of the night was so very vivid and real to me that I ventured to tell it at the breakfast-table the next morning. I thought that Miss Smith had written to my father explaining that the reason she had decided in favor of an Ontario school instead of coming West, was because she was afraid she would be unable to secure a boarding-place near the school and the foolish stories circulated in the East regarding western winters had frightened her. 'Foolishness!' interrupted my brother impatiently. 'What's the use of telling a dream like that? You know very well that Miss Smith wouldn't know father's address.'

"Well, in my dream I thought that Mr. Williams had written to her, giving father's address and telling her she could procure board at his place.

"'Worse than ever,' declared my brother. 'Mr. Williams has nothing to do with the school board, and wouldn't know Miss Smith's address.'

"Well," I said, "it was only a dream and I was just telling you because it seemed so peculiar. Oh, yes, and she ended up the letter by saying that if she was too late to procure the school for the present

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term to please remember her next term because she was very desirous of coming West. Well, now, here's where the strange thing happened. A few days after, my brother and I were at home when my father's mail was brought in and emptied from a grain sack onto the table, and there, to my surprise, was the letter of my dream. I jumped and caught it. Yes, it was the same letter, the same diagonal water marks across the envelope, the same handwriting, and when I looked I saw that it bore the Windsor postmark. I put the letter into my father's hands and told him not to break the seal until I had told them my dream, and when I had finished my father opened and read the letter, and lo, it was the same in every particular.

"The certainty that I had seen that letter when it was written was so evident to me that an uncanny feeling took possession of me and for a while I felt as if Miss Smith's personality enveloped me. The knowledge of the facts astounded and overwhelmed me. My brother and father laughingly declared that Sarah Smith must have been intended for my wife."

I glanced at Miss Smith as I finished, but she had her eyes fixed on some object far out through the window, and her mind seemed far away. Without diverting her gaze she asked, "And how did you explain the circumstances?"

"Well," I replied, "I thought it a case of mental

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telepathy and of course I thought the lady's spirit must be pretty well tuned with mine when I was able to catch her thought like that."

"And what did your people think of the matter?" she asked, still gazing out of the window. "Oh, I remember father laughed and said that Miss Smith must be intended for my wife."

"And did you ever make any inquiry about the lady afterwards?"

"No, I never did. Somehow I always felt like keeping the matter secret. I think my idea was that when we were well enough attuned to give and receive a message over one thousand miles of lake and wilderness, we would meet at the proper place and the appointed time. But as years went by the incident gradually faded from my memory or my mind became occupied with other things. It all came back in a moment, however, when Mrs. Johnston called you Sarah. It does seem strange," I continued. "It would be quite romantic if we found out that she was some relative of yours. You didn't have an aunt of that name, did you?" "No. I don't think I have any relatives of the same name," she said, coldly.

I thought I had tired her by the narration of my dream. So I apologized for being so thoughtless, and, changing the subject, after a while worked around to the topic of Jim Roland's defence. "There are many points about the case which I cannot

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fathom," I told her, "and I have thought that perhaps you might possibly be in a position to assist me in some ways. I don't wish to be too personal, Miss Smith, but I have heard that before the death of Mr. Roland rumor had connected your name with his. In fact, the rumor was that you were to be the mistress of Roland's new home. I thought perhaps you would not object to making me your confidant in a legal way. You see, Miss Smith, the knowledge you might give if you would be so kind, might possibly be used to save an innocent man from a dishonorable death on the gallows. I remember you stated once that there might be a man in some other country who would be likely to hold a grudge against Jim Roland."

"I hardly said that," she replied, cautiously. "Well, not just in those words," I responded, "but was there not some entanglement before your engagement to Mr. Roland?" "Yes," she said calmly. "I was engaged to his cousin before coming West. But he was an absolutely different character," she continued, "and I never cared for him. In fact I was positively afraid of him. He seemed capable of any act if I crossed his will."

"So you came West to get away from him," I suggested, "and when you felt you were free from the domination of his will you wrote to him, breaking the engagement?" She nodded her head and I went on, "But still you feared him, knowing On-

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tario was not far away. So you naturally wished the protection that only a husband can give and Mr. Roland offered that protection?" "Mr. Worthy," she smiled, "you would make a good detective. I never intended to tell a soul about this." "Your information will be treated as confidential and yet be of valuable assistance to me in connection with the case."

"I am glad if it will assist you, Mr. Worthy, to discover the slayer of Mr. Roland. I have sometimes wondered if I had done right in withholding information which might throw some light on the subject, but I feel relieved now that I have told you and if I can give any further assistance I will be glad to do so." I thanked her, and saying that I might have occasion to remind her of that promise I bade her good-evening, and, as her hand lingered for a moment in mine, I looked down into the depth of those eyes and became mystified as to the meaning of the new light I saw there. I turned awkwardly and left the house, feeling that those eyes were still upon me.

CHAPTER III.

LESSONS FROM NATURE'S BOOK--THE JOINING OF THE WATERS AND THE SEPTEM OF LOVE.

TWO months more had passed, and during that time the snow-drifts and the ice had disappeared from plain, hillside and river. In every ravine or gully sounded the music of gurgling water dashing over the bed of boulders on its way to the more-winding but quiet-flowing river. The trees on the sloping hillsides had taken on their dress of shimmering green. The birds were singing their love-notes and calling to their happy mates, and up on the grassy hillsides the bleating of the young lambs mingling with the song of the birds and the noise of the water seemed calling to me, through the blood in my veins, to come out into nature's world and leave the hot office, with its musty books of the laws of men. "Come," they called to me, "and consider the laws of the Creator!"

I quickly disposed of the work I was engaged in, and yielded to my feelings and the call to commune with Nature.

The last two months had been to me a mixture of

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joy and worry. Shortly after the appearance of Miss Bliss upon the scene I found my peace of mind was gone. I certainly did admire the girl and I felt as though I was being drawn into a whirlpool and didn't wish to escape. I was aware that many of our ideals were in direct conflict and I also discovered that after crossing swords with her on many occasions I experienced greater pleasure conversing with Miss Smith.

The two ladies had become fast friends and I often wondered what things they found in common. But they seemed to enjoy each other's company, often going on long walks over the hills or along the river.

Sometimes, when at liberty, I would accompany them, and at other times I would get a horse and rig, and away we'd go spinning over the prairie. In looking back over those bitter-happy days it seems strange that I never thought of taking one without the other.

All this beautiful afternoon I had been thinking of them, comparing them, trying to decide which of them I really liked best, and at last decided that I was really in love with both. I loved each for different qualities, and I cursed the law because it wouldn't allow a man to have two wives.

In this mood I made direct for the path by the river bank. Running water had always had a wonderful fascination for me, which seemed of prenatal origin. It would soothe and lull me to the most

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restful sleep. So when I reached the river I seated myself on a fallen tree-trunk on the bank of the river and musingly watched the bubbles and little whirlpools in the water. I tossed stones and chips into the river and watched the stones sink and the chips whirled away by the current; I mused on many things, but reasoned on none. The stones sink and the chips float away, I thought, and their respective destinies are determined by their own density or weight. Is the destiny of the individual and nation also determined by their specific social gravity? I pondered.

I was thus engaged with my thoughts when a slight rustle on the bank above me caused me to look up, and there I beheld Miss Smith and Miss Bliss. I arose and, touching my hat, took a few steps away, when the former lady called in a cheery, bantering voice:

"Oh, it is you, Mr. Worthy? Don't let us frighten you away. You weren't contemplating anything serious I hope?" "Oh, no," I replied, laughing. "I was just getting near to Nature's heart. Nature is the best and greatest book a man or woman can read."

"Except the Bible," said Vickie Bliss, reprovingly, and challenged me with her eyes to combat.

"All the Bible writers," I replied, "were close students of Nature and by their observations they discovered Nature's God."

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"Could we catch your mood if we were to sit where you were sitting?" asked Sadie Smith.

"Perhaps," I said with a smile, as I led the way down the bank to my fallen tree.

"As a tree falls so shall it lie," quoted Vickie, as she stood looking at my seat. "And so shall it float away," I added, as on the impulse of the moment I pushed it into the water and it went floating down the stream.

For a few moments we stood watching it in silence.

"And what are you thinking of now?" asked Sadie Smith. "Have you caught another lesson from Nature's book?"

"It just struck me," I replied, "that the tree was moving down stream, not up."

"What a funny idea!" cried Vickie Bliss in a merry ripple of laughter. "How else could it go? Surely you did not expect it to float up stream, did you?"

"No, but I thought how natural it was for everything to go down, not up. How easily we can move with the crowd. Yes, as easily as a log moves with the stream. And the power required to move against the current of water, and the current of life."

"All things don't go down," declared Vickie. "Smoke rises, so does vapor, so do prayers."

"Did you intend to convey to us the idea that there was a similarity between smoke and vapor and prayers?" I asked. "I know," I continued, "that

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some prayers condense before they get very far on account of their coldness, and never rise above the roof, and I know that smoke often shuts out the beautiful sunlight, and I feel sure that prayers move in a horizontal direction, acting and reacting upon all with whom we come in contact.

"An old proverb says that there is no smoke without fire, and I would add to that, no prayer without desire."

"Oh, look!" cried Sadie, "the tree has caught on the other bank! Is there a lesson there also?" she asked, teasingly.

"Yes," I replied. "I have seen places in this very river where its course has been changed by a tree being caught on a stone and gradually the sand, the mud and the grass piled against it. Other trees caught also and were covered with more sand, mud and grass, until, finally, the current of the river was forced against the opposite bank, and dug into it until in time (and the possibilities of that word *Time!*) a new channel was cut. Just so, little things may float on our life's stream as it flows onward towards the ocean of eternity and, becoming caught even as this tree, the whole course of our lives is changed, and they flow henceforth in new channels."

We had strolled farther down the stream as we talked until we came to a point where, on the opposite side of the water, a small stream joined the river.

"And what lesson would you draw from that?"

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asked Sadie again as she pointed to the smaller stream.

"Well," I replied, "to continue the figure, if this stream were my life the stream yonder would be another life and here they flow together, never again to part. Some day another spirit may flow into mine and the two henceforth shall be one."

As I said this I remembered what I had told her of my feeling after my father had read the wonderful letter and I stood looking again into the depth of those beautiful eyes that seemed to me at that moment as deep as the ocean. But the eyelids fell and she stood gazing dreamingly over at the joining of the waters and I felt at that moment that her spirit was flowing into mine, for she had caught my mood.

"Come, Sadie," broke in Vickie Bliss, disturbing both of us: Sadie looking at the stream, I looking at her. "It is time we were getting home. Alice is expecting Alex's Uncle Jack this evening and we were to be back early," she said to me in explanation.

The ladies turned to go.

"If I may have the pleasure I will accompany you," I ventured.

"The pleasure will not all be yours," they said in concert, at which we all laughed, as we started 'on the return journey to the village.

"Never will I forget this evening," remarked Sadie. "Something seems to have lodged in my

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brain which may change its mode of thought."

"Well, Mr. Worthy certainly has a wonderful method of teaching," declared Vickie. "His lessons seem easy to learn."

"Not my teachings," I corrected. "I took those lessons out of Nature's book, and students of Nature become apt scholars."

A short time after arriving at Alex Redmond's home Alex arrived, accompanied by his Uncle Jack. And while the ladies were preparing the evening meal we three sat on the veranda enjoying the sweet-smelling evening air while the sun sank lower in his billowy bed of crimson and gold, and while sitting there discussing religion and politics the moon rose, large and red, over the eastern hill, queen of the summer night.

After supper Miss Bliss presided at the piano and a very pleasant evening was spent with music and conversation, after which I accompanied Sadie to Mrs. Johnston's and then went to my own apartments.

As I bade her good-night at the gate I thought she acted strangely. The moon, now high in the heavens, looked down upon us through a fleecy white cloud, and it seemed bewitching in its mellow light. I could scarcely refrain from becoming sentimental, though I was not yet ready to declare my love for her. Indeed, I was far from sure of my own feelings towards her, and, as I walked hurriedly away I remember that I was scarcely out of her

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presence when I was again thinking tenderly of Vickie Bliss. I thought of her as I had seen her that evening—so beautiful, so animated and vivacious!—every movement seemed to whisper to the senses of harmony and grace and created in me a desire for possession. And then I felt my mind accusing me of unfaithfulness to Sadie. Was ever a man in such a predicament before? Why should my mind accuse me thus? I had never committed myself to either lady. And then I thought again of the joining of the waters and looked again into the depth of those two eyes and I felt that I could return to Sadie that minute and clasp her in my arms and tell her of my love. Then, when the thought came to me that perhaps I couldn't win her love, I realized a pang of pain. I almost felt annoyed at myself, for I had arrived at the age of thirty-five without ever having experienced any such feelings before. But what provoked me most was, that there were two ladies in the case instead of one. And I thought what a fool I was to allow my peace of mind to be disturbed in this fashion.

My thoughts being thus occupied on my way home, I was startled by the sound of a quick step behind me, and looking back, I saw that it was Mr. Jack Redmond.

"Oh, it is you, Mr. Worthy?" he said, as he stepped to my side, when I halted. "I am going West again to-night, and just have time to catch the

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train." "I will walk to the station with you," I said. "I don't feel like turning in yet, anyway."

When we arrived at the depot we discovered that the train was over two hours late, so I invited Mr. Redmond to accompany me to my apartments, where I arranged with my landlady for a midnight lunch.

Naturally, our conversation that night led to the discussion of Spiritualism, and he, citing the fact of mediumship in all ancient times, declared it to be the foundation of all religion. The Koran had, he claimed, been dictated to Mahomet by the spirits, he acting as medium; the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the revelations to the Apostles and to many holy men during the intervening ages, had also been revealed by the spirits, as messengers of God. Then why not court communion with them now?

"The spirit of Jesus is the only spirit I wish to court, for it is the spirit of the perfect man, and honoring Him but raises our own standards of life so that we also may go on towards perfection.

"I think the work of Spiritualism in all ages since the Flood has been the art of deception. I believe that men like Confucius, Buddha, Brahma, Mahomet, and some of the founders of the Christian sects, honestly started in a search for truth, but, after they had made the discovery of something they thought was new, they were led captive by the laudation of the people and the flattery of lying spirits.

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Man after man had thus arisen during the history of the world, and, becoming intoxicated with influence and power, they have lorded it over their followers, and endeavored to thus retain them, by the formation of binding creeds, which served to limit investigation and dwarf the intellect. If any dared to explore beyond those bonds the finger of scorn pointed out to the faithful the despised heretic.

"But, happily for the future, those days are now past. Men and women to-day dare to think and use their reason and be guided in both faith and action by that reason."

"The light is certainly dawning," agreed Mr. Redmond, "but that most of the reasoning is faulty is easily demonstrated by the fact that scarcely two men will arrive at the same conclusions."

"Because," I replied, "you can scarcely find two men possessing the same degree of knowledge and using it in the process of reasoning. You, for instance, accept the dogma of the natural immortality of the human soul, and, believing in that dogma, you may logically accept Spiritualism as the natural consequence. But I, on the other hand, reject the premise because it is not substantiated by my reason, and therefore I must reject your conclusions. My reason holds out to me a strong hope of attaining immortality, and that hope at times seems so strong that I feel as if I had already laid hold upon it, and I think this is perhaps the same feeling of

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assurance which old Bible writers experienced. Life cannot be made perpetual until we understand the laws of life. It is only by the knowledge of truth that we can become triumphant over death. If we follow the truth we have, our souls become the more capable of absorbing more, and as we thus grow in wisdom we develop more and more of life's energy."

"If that is so," replied Mr. Redmond, "those souls thus developed in life should be able to commune with the Source of life, and from that Source receive revelations even as in the days of old."

"I see no reason why we shouldn't receive messages from that Source of knowledge. Mental telepathy is a proved fact and by the aid of an instrument we may flash a message around the world. Then why should we doubt the power of the Creator to commune with us, His creatures, if our hearts are attuned to do His will?"

"And that is our idea," said Mr. Redmond. "And, as there are some among the living more advanced or better attuned, as you have put it, we use them as mediums between us and the departed spirits."

"If you said that they acted as mediums between Society and God I would agree. To my mind, every man and woman should be able to commune with the Creator through the one medium, Jesus Christ, and then they in turn should become mediums in a social manner and thus establish justice and righteousness on the earth by the application of the

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principles enunciated by Jesus, to the affairs of nations and states and cities."

"If you really believe that, why have you not lived the principles and experienced the communion?" he asked.

"My faith is not yet strong enough," I replied. "Perhaps some day it will become stronger, my heart better attuned, and then all knowledge for my good will come to me."

"Well, I have enjoyed our discussion and our supper," said he, glancing at his watch. "I must go now or run the risk of missing the train."

I again walked to the depot with him, continuing our conversation as we went, and, upon returning home, I began to question my own mind as to the strength of the faith that was in me. Did I really believe, as I had stated to Mr. Redmond, that the creature could communicate with the Creator through the mediumship of Jesus Christ, and that by that communion, knowledge could be transmitted so that we could understand things otherwise dark with mystery?

I could think of no reason why it should not be, and there were a thousand reasons why it should be thus, and at that moment I felt filled with such harmony the very beat of my heart seemed to be in unison with some influence around me, within me. My soul breathed love for all mankind, for God, and all His creatures. I gave myself up to the rap-

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ture and delight of this influence and aloud I cried, "Oh God, my Father, if it be Thy will, reveal Thy love to Thy Son!"

I threw myself across my bed and buried my face in my hands, and in that ecstacy of glory I fell asleep. And oh, such sleep! Every moment I was conscious of the love that was in me and that love seemed to re-vibrate through every fiber of my being.

How long I lay thus I know not, but when I opened my eyes (or thought so in my dream), I felt that some one was very near to me, though I saw no one. But there before my bed, at about arm's length, a wonder met my astonished gaze. There stood a small table and on it rested a large book. My curiosity was aroused, so raising myself on one elbow I gazed upon the vision.

The book appeared beautifully bound in morocco and upon its uppermost side, done in gold outline, was a picture of the seven golden candlesticks; then, above the candlesticks, arranged in a semi-circle, was the title of the volume, "The Septem of Love."

Upon the upper half of the book as it lay upon the table there appeared, as if having come from between the leaves, great drops of water, clear as crystal. "Oh," thought I, "water is an emblem of truth." And then my soul seemed filled with light and life, and instantly I was aware of the contents of that portion of the book from which oozed the crystal drops.

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The Septem of Love were the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth. These spirits were represented by the seven lights of the golden candlesticks placed in the Tabernacle of Israel. Each light was a separate love, creating its consequent heaven for those in that love, or walking in that light, and when the first love was perfected in the soul it was prepared to step into the next love, and thus advance into another degree, with greater capacity for happiness. Thus, step by step, from one degree to another, we must progress until we reach the Seventh, and dwelling in this Seventh love, or light, or life, we experience the joy of the Seventh heaven. Perfect humanity, perfect love, perfect light, perfect life; no hate, no darkness, no death.

Wondering as to the contents of the last half of the book, and assuming the presence of some one in the room. I asked, "And what is the truth contained in the last half of the book?" And the answer came to my soul, though I heard no sound,

"You shall know in due course of time, after you have nourished your soul with the Septem of Love."

Again I looked toward the book, but it and the table on which it lay had dissolved from my sight.

With a feeling of sweet peace I laid my head back on my pillow to think of what I had seen, to reason, and let the Spirit of light, life and love flow into my thirsty soul, refreshing, strengthening, and thus saving it. Yes, saving it, from envy, malice and hatred.

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How long I thus lay meditating upon the truths contained in the "Septem of Love" I know not, for time had ceased, since time can only be reckoned where life has a limit. But when I awoke my soul was yet basking in its glorious light.

The seven Spirits of God sent into all the earth were the seven degrees of Love's dominion over the soul.

The first degree was the individual's love of life, and this was the foundation of all the other degrees.

The second degree grew naturally out of the first, and was Conjugal Love. Around these two loves have raged the billows of sin and lust through all the centuries, constantly endeavoring to counterfeit the true and holy union of the man and woman; deceiving the ignorant, by bringing the mind into subjection to material and sensual appetites, instead of a proper balance of the intellectual and physical senses, as is the case where true love holds sway.

And then with what joy the third heaven is reached when the new, young life unites in one body the life and intellect of the pair! What mother or father, with this love in their hearts, has not thought with joy as they looked upon the face of their child, that it was but the physical manifestation of their love for one another?

Then, from the love of the child, grows Community love, for what parent is there who does not desire the best possible surroundings for the growing

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child? Next, National, International, and Universal love, follow in their order, leading all the world at last to accept the brotherhood of all men, and thus enter the seventh degree, and experience the joys of the seventh heaven—where nation shall not lift up sword against nation;—when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

This is the evolution of Love: this is the key which unlocks the riddle of history. Apply it where you will, and the motive behind the action at once becomes apparent. Take up this rule and with it you may measure Individual Pairs, Families, Communities, Nations. You may apply it to any institutions in the nations; you may arrange them in their order, and you will know the degree of their love. Yes, by it you may measure all things and judge all things.

Early the next morning I arose, feeling refreshed, invigorated, though my mind had been actively engaged during the whole night.

The harmony of thought produced by the Septem of Love seemed to bring rest of body. I quietly left the house for there was no one yet astir. I walked through the quiet village, past Alex Redmond's house, and then to the hills beyond. Higher and higher I climbed, though the long grass was wet with dew, until I reached the prairie level some three hundred feet above the village. Seating myself upon

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a large limestone I watched the sun rise as out of the sea. Then it appeared as a great ball of fire rolling over the boundless level prairie.

Innumerable bluffs of poplar and willow trees dotted the landscape, appearing like islands in the early morning light; and down below me a fog was rising from the valley. The winding river could no more be seen, the village was submerged in the mist, and in its stead, a beautiful crystal lake, over which the morning sun now cast his golden hues, lay placidly before me.

On the opposite bank the dark-green, wooded slopes swept to the shores of the mimic lake.

The harmony of soul I had felt the previous night again swept over me as I gazed on this scene of beauty.

As the fog rose higher it broke into fleecy clouds and swept up the hillside.

“Ah,” mused I, “is not this a symbol of the mental fog now lifting from numberless minds in the early morning of the dawn? The light and warmth has come which will dispel the fogs and mists that gathered in the darkness, and the day will shine brighter like the coming of the morning.”

The previous evening Sadie and I had listened to the whippoorwill and the swish of the nighthawk, but now the meadow-lark was filling the air with her mellow notes of welcome to the morning, and many other birds vied with her in her song of joy.

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To-day was to be a gala day in our village, so I descended again to the valley, and, as I entered the town I saw that many of the buildings were already decorated with flags and bunting. The holiday spirit had taken possession of the people and preparations were going on for the entertainment of visitors from the country and neighboring towns. As I descended from the hills I had also descended from the intellectual heights I had climbed the previous evening, so I gave myself up to the spirit of pleasure and good will that was fast taking possession of the assembling throng, which seemed to include representatives of all the nations of Europe and some of Asia. There could be seen the short, stout women of Central and Northern Europe, dressed in their short skirts and heavy shoes, a black silk or fancy kerchief tied neatly over their heads, and perhaps walking by their sides were their daughters, raised in Canada. They had attended the public schools, spoke English as fluently as their own tongue, were bright, quick-witted girls, neatly dressed and wearing the latest in hats and shoes. When, looking upon such evidences of progress, I queried as to the cause of this wonderful change in course of one generation, the answer came,—Liberty, Independence and Self-respect. These are the heavenly plants which grow and blossom in all American minds. Freed from Old World ideas of kings and serfs the American mind presumes to at least grasp at the idea of

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equality, and when this idea once finds lodgment in the European mind it seems to stimulate it to action, to self-reliance, and thus to manhood and womanhood.

The European serf has here been transformed into the American king, with the ballot in his hand, and now lacks only the necessary knowledge as to the best method of using this badge of political equality, so that he may win industrial emancipation and social equality.

While making these observations I had been standing on the street corner, and being thus occupied I had not noticed Alex and Vickie approaching, but Alex's cheery voice startled me, and looking around, I faced the two.

"Thinking again?" said Alex, laughing, merrily and happily.

"He has been admiring the quaint costumes of the groups yonder," said Vickie, pointing toward a half dozen Hungarian women. "My thoughts had carried me as far as the next generation," I replied, "and I saw the sons and daughters of these people holding positions of honor and trust in our land; I saw,—but I will tell you later. I must go now and hunt some breakfast and if I can find you when I return I will promise you that something more charming will occupy my thought the remainder of the day." As I said this I turned to Vickie, who, after tearing me for not yet having breakfasted, declared

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that she would be on the lookout for me, but feigned not to notice my allusion to her charms.

And as I looked upon her, fresh and beautiful, my heart (or, to speak more correctly, my impulsive nature, my subjective mind), again instinctively yearned to possess her for my own; and my reason or objective mind, could offer but faint resistance. Her mental pleasures were not the same as mine, it whispered; her faith and trust would be shocked by my criticisms. Leave her in the enjoyment of her innocence, for knowledge is not always productive of happiness. But again my heart answered back: "I love her and love will cast all barriers aside."

After finishing my breakfast I hastened toward the sports ground and on my way overtook Sadie Smith and Mrs. Johnston. After greeting them, I walked by their side, and upon reaching the grounds, Mrs. Johnston, seeing some friends, rushed off, leaving Sadie to my care.

"Well," I thought, "fate is against me," for I intended to hunt up Vickie Bliss and if possible monopolize her for the day. But the next moment, catching the light of Sadie's eyes, I reproached myself for the thought, and my reason said to me as I looked again upon her form, "she is more elegant, more intellectual, more suited to my whole nature than is Vickie." I thought of her as my wife and the thought was, I found, a pleasant one. I felt that I could be proud of her in any company. And

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then my other self said that the same applied to Vickie. Still, I felt somehow there was a difference. I was again provoked at myself for I remembered the thoughts and feelings I had experienced when a few hours before I had been in Vickie's company. I told myself that I was fickle-minded because I always seemed to love the one I was with best. While these thoughts were passing through my mind Sadie was talking merrily, and I was answering her in a care-free manner suitable to the occasion.

Just then my eye caught sight of Vickie, who had just turned from some ladies she had been talking with. Sadie saw her at the same moment, and, pulling my coat-sleeve, said, "Come on, there is Vickie." She darted through the crowd and I followed, quickening my step so as to gain her side.

"Oh Sadie," Vickie began, after greeting her, "what do you think of a man who doesn't take his breakfast until ten o'clock, but goes wandering over the hills while the grass is wet with dew?" As she said this she glanced sideways at me, which Sadie noticed, and cast an inquiring look toward me. "I plead guilty," I said. "The morning was beautiful, as seen from the top of those hills, and, you know, a man does not live by bread alone."

"I think there must be something on his mind," continued Vickie, addressing Sadie. "What do you think of him?"

"And there is something on my mind," I inter-

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rupted, not giving Sadie an opportunity to answer. "I think we better all go and have some ice cream," and I turned towards the refreshment stands, they both walking by my side.

We got the ice cream and my dish was emptied first. Vickie ordered another dish for me, explaining to Sadie that I required two dishes to cool my ardor. So I emptied the second dish and told them that I felt pretty cool towards both of them. We discussed the people, the horses, the sports, and many a sight brought humorous remarks from the girls. Thus the day passed, and it was a day that I will never forget. I thoroughly enjoyed myself but all the time I felt as though I were sinking deeper and deeper into a tangle out of which I could see no way of escape.

Those two girls were enough to ruin any man's peace of mind, I thought, as I retired that night, and rehearsed the events of the day. Vickie had been most affable but had continued her insinuating banter all day long, seeming to assume that there was some understanding between me and Sadie. And time and again I noticed that she seemed embarrassed by Vickie's jests. I wondered now why each had acted in this manner. Then the idea came to me that Vickie must have been trying to discover if there were any understanding between us. Was she in love with me and just a little jealous of Sadie? I flattered myself that such might be so, and ere I closed my eyes in slumber I resolved to go to her

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some time during the next week and declare my love for her.

Upon awaking in the morning I remembered my resolution and instantly accused myself of folly and absurd thoughts during the darkness of the night, and there and then I made another resolution: that I would never act upon opinions arrived at after days of unnatural excitement, or at a time when my subjective mind was likely to be in control. And yet I did not wish to suppress it in any way, for I knew that all happiness is the result of its desires being gratified.

All sin and crime are the result of a dethroned reason and a perverted will; for the time being the impulsive or subjective mind takes the reins and rides rough-shod over the objective mind, which should be the dictator of all moral acts.

Repentance of a sinful or criminal act comes when the objective mind again gets control. Thus, on this occasion, I repented of the folly of the night before, and compelled the subjective mind to keep its place. I decided that I must wait and keep a watch on the words of my mouth, that they betray neither the thoughts of my mind nor the desires of my heart.

During the next month I spent several evenings at the Redmond home, and had many opportunities to become better acquainted with Miss Bliss.

Upon one of these occasions, it being Sunday afternoon, Alex and I again got deep in the subject of

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religion. The ladies also were present and seemed much interested in the discussion.

We had expressed our own ideas on the subjects of hypnotism, mental telepathy, and their mode of operation on the mind. Alex had stated that it was his idea that all spirit phenomena were traceable to the power of suggestion, sometimes oral, and sometimes automatic; "but invariably," said he, "all knowledge imparted by so-called spirits was limited by the knowledge of some living human agent," and he cited the supposed message of his father, to illustrate.

His uncle was familiar with the circumstances of his death, and he, upon mention of his father's name, necessarily thought of the terrible struggle in the waters; and his mind had perhaps sent a telepathic message to the medium.

"I believe your theory to be correct in many cases, but you can't make its application universal," I replied. "To do so you would make it impossible for mankind to acquire any knowledge except that which could be reasoned out by individual members of the race, from known premises, and if that were the case it would be impossible for the Eternal Mind to, with all its power, communicate any knowledge to man, whatsoever."

"And that is the very position I take," replied Alex. "All facts known to us to-day have been learned by severe trials and infinite labor."

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"If you substitute the word *proved* instead of *learned*, I will agree," I stated.

"Tell me, is there not a power beckoning to us from the Unknown, calling to us to come and investigate? What is that power we possess, which we term imagination, when our minds break loose and scale the walls of facts which hem us in, and in rapturous delight we explore the fields of speculation?"

"Yes, Alex, I know there is a power which sometimes touches us in sleep and suggests new thoughts that we may prove in our waking moments.

"Often our minds become troubled in an effort to solve some difficult problem. The more we think the more muddled we become. We throw ourselves down and sleep, and behold! Some beautiful influence enters our clouded brain and almost instantly the riddle is solved at the bidding of some new idea, never before conceived.

"That which was chaos before now arranges itself into perfect order. That which was difficult to understand is now made plain, and when ideas thus dispose themselves in order in our minds it becomes easy to retain them in our memories."

I looked up, expecting a reply, but his mind was busy trying to arrange my statement into his system of thought and as he spoke not, I continued, narrating to them my experience regarding the "Septem of Love."

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I explained how, upon that occasion, order had displaced chaos in my mind, respecting the spirits of God, by introducing into my thought the idea of seven different degrees of love and their resultant joys.

"I suppose you would place me pretty low down in your scale," said Alex, with a laugh.

"Well, I guess you can pretty near place yourself, Alex; where would you say you stood?"

"Only in the second degree," he immediately replied.

"Yes, Alex, that's where I would put you. That's your grade. Your interest in the higher degrees is limited by the effect of their bearing upon conjugal love."

"And I guess I am in the same heaven as Alex," put in Mrs. Raymond.

Then Vickie, looking up mischievously, asked, "And what degree would you say I was in, Mr. Worthy?"

"That's just what I would like to know," I replied, with a meaning smile to the others. And instantly the mischievous expression left Vickie's face, and I remembered my resolve to guard the words of my mouth, for I found that out of the fullness of the heart the mouth desires to speak.

"If I were to accept your idea of a personal God," declared Alex, "I would arrive at the same conclusions as you have. Joe; but I can't see it yet, and I

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never will be guilty of what is called faith in God. If there is a God I want to *know* Him."

"And it is only by knowing Him that we can have faith in Him," I replied. "You have faith and trust in your wife, Alex, because you know her character; that is also why you love her. 'Tis the same with our love and faith and trust in God. These feelings in us are the effect of knowing His character and you will find that revealed in the Septem of Love. If you wish to know Him, Alex, you must draw near to Him in your heart, even as you sought your wife's presence that you might know her character. And if we thus draw near unto Him, His Spirit will lead us into all truth.

"The proof I gave you some time ago of the absolute necessity of accepting the idea of a conscious, intelligent Being in order to account for the first movement in the material world is but material reasoning, and even if accepted as a fact would leave us in no better position than before, if thought stopped there. But it cannot stop there for the *mind* then develops the senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling, and tasting, in a mental or spiritual sense, even as the body possesses these senses in a material way.

"To truly worship God is to meditate upon His wonderful works and plans for us. And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

As I spoke I intently watched his face, the expres-

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sions of which kept changing as his head moved slowly from side to side.

"Alex," I said, "to deny it is to deny your own existence. You might just as well deny Euclid's axiom that parallel lines never meet."

He raised his head until his eyes met mine and calmly declared, "I don't *know* anything. In this wide universe there may even be some point where all lines meet. In fact, the universe itself may be no universe, and life may be continually rolling in upon itself; or it may be only a meaningless dream."

He had reached the limit of his conception and his last sentence was meaningless to reason.

But I awoke him from his dementia by asking him, "If such a thing were possible, who or what was doing the dreaming? If life and intelligence are non-existent, then words, and reason, and even the dream, are folly."

He at once saw where his thought had led him but it was a hard struggle for his soul to admit to itself that the power of reason, which he had always used to support his doubts, had at last played him false. It had, in fact, right-about-faced, and there and then dropped the seeds of belief into a mind well prepared.

But Alex was not yet done, for still his reason must be satisfied, and he exclaimed, "If Life and Love and Light are attributes of God then let us worship Him and not the Son of Mary! The worship of Jesus is

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but the worship of the creature. Man might develop perpetual life in a condition of love and light if he loves those characteristics of his God, but the worshippers of Jesus don't even honor the principles He taught. He made love the foundation of His kingdom. To Him, love was fulfilling of all law and love was the currency that cancelled all debts. But they who profess to worship Him have entirely ignored these principles and the blackest pages of history are the records of the atrocious deeds of His professed worshippers."

"I know, Alex, but these people were ignorant of the power of His love, which was the perfect reflection of the love of His Father. They bowed down to His human form and worshipped Him as they had worshipped the figures of wood and stone. I love him as a brother who illustrated to us the Spirit of our Father. He taught his followers to pray to our Father, and when He had demonstrated to those same followers the power of life over death, He said to Mary, 'Go to my brethren and say unto them I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God.' And we honor Him only when we honor the Spirit of God which was in Him, reconciling the world unto Himself through this manifestation of his love to all.

"I worship God and God only. I love Jesus as our elder brother and a Son of God, even as we also may become sons of God, by following in His foot-

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steps; but Jesus was not God; it never entered His mind to claim any kind of equality with God. This deifying of Jesus is one of the worst heresies held in Christendom."

"But he was God," declared Vickie, vehemently, "and I am astonished at you, Mr. Worthy, saying that it is wrong to worship Jesus. I think that such an idea is worse than rank infidelity. If you take away the worship of Jesus Christ, Christianity becomes a myth."

"Then," said I, calmly looking her in the eyes, "let Christianity become a myth; but if we do the will of Jesus we will pray to and worship our Heavenly Father and His Father, our God and His God."

On Vickie's features were depicted the emotions of contempt and disgust, while Mrs. Redmond's eyes were moistened by tears of pity for her in her distress. Her heart had also gone out in sympathy to her beloved husband, as she saw him, figuratively, shipwrecked, grasping at the last small plank of his noble ship. Then it, too, disappeared, and there in a boundless ocean he battled with the waters of oblivion. She stood, as it were, and watched the struggle, knowing that his fate must be hers also, and we may imagine the joy she felt when she realized that they both stood firm upon the rock of God's love. And in the knowledge that I had been permitted to assist in the rescue my joy was full.

Miss Bliss, I knew, had not seen the struggles of

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an honest soul. Her religious training had taught her to look upon all doubters as hardened rebellious sinners, at war with God and truth. I understood her point of view and made due allowance, though realizing that the very impulses which then controlled her were a direct denial of the religion of love which she professed.

But I had not finished what I wished to say, so proceeded:

"Jesus came not to claim or ask the worship of the world, but to annunciate the principles of life and immortality. Not to found a religion which should bear His name but to sow the seeds which would in the due time grow and develop into His glorious Kingdom, when every knee shall bow and confess that Jesus is the Christ of God. To me," I continued, "the word Christianity is a meaningless phrase, for all kinds of false ideas and wrong actions have been held and committed under that name. The name is cherished by those who are the worst enemies of the principles which Jesus taught and the whole world is drunk with the wine of their fornication."

This was more than Miss Bliss could stand, so she quickly left the room as a sign of protest, and shortly after I saw her pacing up and down the garden path, apparently still in a spirit of indignation. My love for her was not in the least diminished, but my reason whispered, "I knew that was the way it would be."

Alex and Mrs. Redmond had also noticed Vickie's

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manner of protest and Alex remarked, "That's a good sample of the intolerant spirit of past ages. If she could, she would think it right to have us burned at the stake, and yet she would claim to love the Christ, whom, she says, loves all mankind."

"The fact of the matter is, Alex, the religious beliefs of to-day are the accumulated heresies of all the past ages, accompanied by very little love."

"The church workers of to-day are like the hog-raisers of Kansas," said Alex. "They raised hogs and sold them to buy more land to raise more corn to feed more hogs to buy more land to raise more corn, etc. And the churches of to-day are sending out their ministers to rope in more people to get more money to send more preachers to get more people to get more money to send more preachers, etc. Numbers and dollars are the whole thing; don't bother about the quality or the end in view."

"Don't be too hard on them, Alex," I responded, "things as they are to-day are the product of what has gone before, even as the future will be shaped by an awakening and protest against the things as they are. The whole world is ready for the change."

"Before any change can come," said Alex, "the principles and teachings of Jesus Christ will have to be re-arranged and re-stated."

"That is so, Alex," I replied, "and there is work for all of us to do in the restatement and reconstruction of the true religious conceptions."

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CHAPTER IV.

THE POLAR EXPEDITIONS AND THE HOLLOW EARTH—
MORE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE—AND
MY SARAH SMITH.

IT was now the middle of July and the Crown had not yet brought on the trial of Fred Ray, as the prosecution was yet unprepared. I was glad of the delay myself, as I considered the more time I had, the more I could strengthen the defence.

I had made inquiries as to the whereabouts of Sadie Smith's old lover, Arthur Roland of Windsor, but could get no track of him. I found that he had disappeared from those parts previous to the shooting of Jim Roland, and had never been seen or heard of since. So I almost despaired of discovering his present habitation.

Miss Smith had left on a visit to Winnipeg, at the close of the school term, intending to return in time to accompany a camping party to the Qu' Appelle Lakes. Vickie was expecting her return on the afternoon train and I found it necessary to take this same train to Regina.

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As I stood on the platform I saw Sadie when she left the train and hastily greeted her, after which I stepped aboard. The train was just starting, and above me, on the car platform, was the figure of a surly, bulldog-looking man, carrying a large suit-case.

I saw that he wished to leave the train, for he came bearing down upon me. So I stepped to one side and endeavored to squeeze past his corpulent figure. As I pushed in against the end of the car, his huge body lurched against the iron railing. He stepped off, however, and, with one hand upon his side, with the other he made angry gestures at me, and I could hear him, above the rumble of the moving wheels, cursing the upstart who had got in his way.

The incident had produced in me a dislike for the man, whoever he was, and I thought of him as one of that class of men who, possessing an abundance of money, use it to gratify every appetite, caring nothing for any recognized moral code. In a word, he was a libertine. I could see it on every line of his face; a man capable of any act, if impulse or necessity pushed him on. Just such a man as he could have shot Jim Roland and then turned around and attended his funeral.

A few minutes later I had purchased a Winnipeg daily and settled myself down to its perusal. For some minutes I was thus engaged, when I felt a hand laid upon my shoulder, and, looking up, I saw the smiling face of my old college chum, now Dr.

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Kirk. I pointed to the seat opposite and he, in the same careless way, threw himself into it.

"Well, Joe, how is your world going?" he asked.

"O. K.," I replied, "how is yours?"

"Oh, I can't complain, though sometimes I can't get my own way. Oh, by the way," he went on, "Vickie Bliss is visiting at the Redmonds', is she not?"

"Yes," I answered, "are you acquainted with her?"

"Why, yes, I have known her for years. Darned nice girl, too. I thought once that I stood a pretty good show there, but when I came to the point she informed me that she was already taken—she didn't think I cared—and all that kind of talk—when I had dreamed about her from the first day I set eyes on her; and I feel angry at myself that I hadn't spoken before. I just waited around and let that old bulldog Davis cut rings around me. I didn't think she cared two straws for that old duffer. I see he just got off the train at your town. Calling to see his lady love, I presume. It beats me what a girl like her can see in such a man. To me he looks more like a criminal than anything else."

I instantly thought of the man I had encountered and I knew he was Davis.

"But what makes me mad," continued Kirk, "is that it was through me that they first got acquainted. I was on the eastbound train last fall when Davis got on at your town and before we got to the next

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town he took sick—seemed to be nervous prostration. He was pretty sick too, so I stayed right with him until we got to Winnipeg, and then helped him home.

"Vickie came aboard at Brandon, where she had been visiting her aunt, and as I spoke to her when she entered the car she took a seat across the aisle from us. I moved over to her seat and chatted with her for some time, and the old dog was listening to every word we said. When I told her where Davis had got on the train she said she had a sister living there, a Mrs. Redmond. Then he butted in and declared he was well acquainted with Alex. I didn't like the old fellow and I tried several times to cut him off but it was no use. Vickie's sympathies were aroused and she would talk to him, and pretty soon they were chatting away like old friends. But how he ever managed to become a visitor at her home I don't know, and I guess it doesn't matter, now he's beat me out. They say he's a rich old devil, though I can't think that Vickie would be influenced by wealth in such a matter. But I give it up, because I can't understand the actions of women in love affairs. They often seem to do the very opposite to what a fellow would expect."

"Davis didn't mention his business at _____ that day, did he?" I asked, as he finished.

"No, he didn't mention what his business was, but I thought he was looking at land because he

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said he had been driving, looking over the country."

"Could you give me any idea as to the date you met him?"

"Why yes, I was going to Winnipeg that trip, to attend my sister's wedding. Let's see, she was married on November the first. So it would be about October the thirty-first that I met him."

"I made a note of the incident and the date, which was the date of the murder.

"What time was it he boarded the train?" I asked.

"About nineteen o'clock," he replied, "and as he was pretty bad, I took him off at Brandon and waited for the morning train. But what is your interest in the man? Have you also become interested in Miss Bliss?"

I started at the question, but only replied, "I believe he is the man I am looking for. Did you see his ticket?"

"No, because he hadn't any. He paid his fare to the conductor." I put this down also in my note-book.

Had I discovered a clue? was Providence giving me the facts so that I could ascertain the real murderer of Jim Roland?

After my other business was completed I called while in Regina at the gaol to see Fred Ray and let him know the progress his case was making.

I had arranged with Dr. Kirk to spend the evening with him, at his office, and when I was ushered into that gentleman's presence I was agreeably sur-

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prised to find another old friend in the person of Will Price, who had become a successful dealer in Regina real estate. He shook my hand as though he thought my arm was a pump-handle. "By George, I am glad to see you, Joe! You're just the man I want. I have a snap for you, Joe; a big deal, swung by the investment of a little cash, and sure, big returns."

"Why don't you cinch the deal, yourself, Will, and keep the big returns?"

"I haven't got the dough or I certainly would."

He went on talking of town lots, farm lands, railways, and all kinds of town-boom talk, until I told him to quit it and talk sense.

"Regina," he persisted, "is bound to be the biggest city between Winnipeg and Vancouver. It is the capital of the greatest province of the greatest dominion of the greatest empire the world has ever known. The crop returns this last year show that Saskatchewan grew more wheat than all the rest of Canada combined, and what it will do in the next five years will astound the world. And here is Regina, the capital city in the midst of all this wealth-production."

"And where does Saskatoon come in?" I asked, winking at the doctor.

"Or Moose Jaw?" he suggested, mischievously.

"Doctor," I demanded, "haven't you some physic that would do him good? He's certainly got it bad."

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"He got his fortune told last night, by Madam De Vale," explained the doctor, "and she assured him that he would be successful and would become a millionaire, and, of course, he feels in the flush of success. Oh, yes, and he's going into the Legislature, too. Isn't that right, Bill?"

"That's her talk," admitted Bill. "You can take it for what it is worth."

"Say, boys," he suddenly exclaimed, as though he thought of some bright idea. "You fellows better go over to-night and see what she can make of your cases."

"We'll accept your kind invitation, Bill," said the doctor, winking at me, "but won't the expense be too heavy on your pocket, Bill?"

"No," shouted Will, jumping to his feet. "I am Bill Price, don't forget that, and it will be worth all the expense to know what kind of characters you fellows have."

Saying this, he went to the 'phone and asked Central to give him No. Ten—Madame De Vale. Yes, she could arrange for an interview at 9 o'clock, and we agreed with her to present ourselves at that hour.

Subject after subject was discussed by us, from politics to the disappearance of the intrepid Dr. Cook.

"By George!" said Will, "it did me good to see the way Cook fooled the Yanks. I tell you, he's a

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slick one, and I guess he made his pile before they got on to him, too."

"Well, Peary's fooling them now," said Dr. Kirk. "I don't believe either of them got to the pole. I think Bernar, of the *Arctic*, was right when he said to an interviewer at Quebec, last October, that in the northern regions a scientific man is no better than a sailor. He said it was almost an impossibility to take accurate observations on account of the refraction of the sun's rays."

"Well, I tell you, boys," I broke in, "I think the probability is that they both got to a place 90 degrees north of the equator but that wasn't the axis of the earth. If I had time I could prove to you that the earth is a hollow sphere with great openings at the poles and if Cook and Peary had gone straight on they would have traveled right into the interior and made a greater discovery than Columbus did, when he discovered America."

"By George!" exclaimed Will, "you always were peculiar, Joe. You seem to think on subjects no one else considers worth while. I have heard some people claim that Hell was inside the earth and I guess Cook and Peary should have gone there all right."

"And what's that got to do with Madame De Vale?" asked the doctor.

"Just this," replied Will. "She's got to get word from there before she can tell your past deeds and have matters properly ordered for your future."

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"And did she tell you last night that she got her information from that quarter?" asked the doctor.

"Oh no, she can tell the character of a real estate man by his face, but she has to send there for information as to the character of doctors and lawyers," he replied, with a loud laugh in which the doctor and I joined. And we acknowledged that he had come out best. "But say, Joe," continued Will, "what do you think of this fortune-telling business, anyway? I know of any number of cases where fortunes were told which after-events proved true to the letter."

I explained my ideas as I had previously done to Alex Redmond, and stated it to be my belief that when the objective mind of the medium was in complete sleep, it became possible for the spirit of a fallen angel to take possession of the body and perform things which seemed miraculous to our limited senses. But Will Price, being skeptical as to the existence of any kind of angels, declared his ideas as follows:

"Every thought," he began, "cast off from the Supreme Mind is accompanied by magnetic energy, more or less, and this energy possesses the power to gather around it a form, its parts assembled from the molecular universe. True, all things which exist are but materially clothed thoughts. Telepathic communication is accomplished by this method: in thinking of a number we think of the form of the figures

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by which that number is represented, and in just the same manner, every animal, every bird, every fish, every reptile, every tree, every plant, or flower, is but the materialized thought of some power continually working for the good or ill of the human race.

"A thought, if sufficiently energized, will gather a body in this manner, and appear as a spirit or ghost, deliver its message, and then dissolve again into the unit of matter. Impelling thought is the life of it, thought, in fact, was the source of all life. Man must run his allotted time and then again be dissolved into material units, and the future life, which is the fond hope of millions, must depend upon the will or thought of the Creator, and it is not likely that the unfit will ever be remembered or again come into being. The idea really means a re-creation which must insure to the re-created mind a knowledge of a past existence so as to give it individuality."

"But you fail to account for the foretelling of future events by your theory, Will," I declared.

"You are wrong, Joe. On the contrary, my theory does account for revelations to man, direct from the Eternal Mind, which, by the way, is the only mind. You see, if that mind wishes to foretell future events it simply thinks them in the Spirit, and the thought vibrates through the universe but must materialize before it can communicate to material beings."

"Will," said the doctor, who had been intently

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listening, "it's time we were going to see what Madam De Vale has to say about it," and as it was a few minutes to nine we proceeded to that lady's parlors.

We were let in by the lady in person, and when seated, the key was turned in the door and safely deposited in the pocket of her skirt.

She soon had passed behind the curtain, had induced a trance, and returned, ready to narrate the doctor's history and fortune.

She began, and without a miss, told the circumstances of his past life, and then continued: "I must tell you," she said, "that you, unknowingly, hold the key to a great mystery, affecting three lives besides your own.

"Your future wife, a tall, fair, blue-eyed girl, is at present under the influence of a large, stout, dark man. The other life affected is another man, who is now in trouble, but take hope, for your love will be reciprocated and then the man in trouble will be exonerated."

I instantly thought of Davis, and so had the doctor, for he shot a glance at me which inquired as to the ideas which were passing through my mind. The lady then entered into a more minute description of his future wife, which was a perfect duplicate of Vickie Bliss.

It was now my turn, and when Madam had returned from behind the curtain where she had re-

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mained for a few minutes, she stated that she had given my case special consideration, having been much impressed with the past incidents of my life.

She then narrated most accurately the principal parts I had played in life, told me my profession, and there, before those two old chums, she declared that I was in love and that there were two ladies in the case, and my future happiness depended upon my getting the right one, and I saw, she assured me, that she carried a scar on her left shoulder.

As this was all, Will Price, sport as he was, insisted upon paying the fee and we were politely bowed out.

"Well, what do you think of her?" asked Will, as soon as we were again in the open air.

"She is possessed," declared the doctor.

"Yes," replied Will, "possessed with the facts which she gathered from your minds."

"She couldn't get the events of the future from our minds," objected the doctor. "And the future hasn't happened yet," I reminded him.

We now bade Will Price good-night, thanking him for the entertainment, and as soon as we were alone the doctor said to me, "Say, Joe, she described Vickie to a 'T'. I believe I will run over some day soon and put my fortune to the test. I'll run up to see you on business, you know. You might let her know that you expect me."

I made no reply as I was at that moment thinking

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of Sadie and comparing her with Vickie. He noticed my silence, turned on me and stared me in the face, exclaiming, "By George, Joe! Is she one of the ladies Madam De Vale was mixing you up with?"

"She didn't say who they were," I answered. "I think very highly of Miss Bliss, but there is no mix-up."

Before we parted, the doctor jokingly demanded my promise that I would be his groomsmen when he was married and I agreed, providing that he would return the service when my turn came.

He walked to my hotel with me and then I bade him good-bye and went to my room, after leaving a call for the early morning train. My sleep that night was dreamless, but nevertheless, a vague sense of unrest seemed to possess me, as of some impending fate which I could not or would not escape.

The next morning the electric bell at the head of my bed awoke me, and at that moment I felt that Vickie Bliss had eluded my grasp and my intellect experienced a pleased sensation as if it were glad that reason was to be a ruler of my impulse.

After eating my breakfast I hastened to the station and a few hours later arrived home.

I went directly to my office, and after attending to some accumulated business, my mind again settled to the solution of the murder mystery.

It was the middle of the afternoon of a hot July day, and, as I sat there, trying to bring the different

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threads together, I felt an impulse to take a walk around town. Then, remembering that Davis might still be in town I yielded to the impulse and, leaving my office, walked towards Alex Redmond's barber shop.

As I passed the livery stable I saw Davis, who had apparently just come in with a rig, leaving the stable carrying a coat over his arm. I stepped into the stable and, after a few casual remarks, asked the liveryman who the stranger was. "Don't know his name," he replied, "but I've seen him before. He had one of our rigs out last fall when he was here. He's just had Miss Bliss out driving. I guess he's sweet on the girl."

I took a note of the statement that Davis had had a horse and rig out, when here in the fall. I was certainly getting the necessary evidence. After supper I went to the barber shop for a shave. I thought perhaps I might meet Davis and, sure enough, I did. I wanted to get a closer scrutiny of the man, and was given the opportunity I wished. When I entered, he was tilted back in a chair, talking with Alex, who gave me an introduction to him.

"Is this your first visit to our town?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "but I like the place first rate; all the business men seem to be good, progressive fellows, and although this is my first visit I hope it will not be my last."

I settled myself in the barber chair and Alex be-

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gan to shave me, talking the while with Davis, and I must confess that my ears were alert to catch every word. He stated that he was going direct to Winnipeg on the nineteen-twenty train, and, before my shave was completed, he bade us good-bye and departed.

Alex now asked me regarding the progress of the Ray case, and I gave him all the information I deemed advisable. I declared my belief in the innocence of the accused man and expressed my idea that the deed was committed by an outsider.

"Suppose we take a drive out that way, this evening?" suggested Alex. "I've never been out there yet. We can get a double rig and take the girls along. I can close up here in twenty minutes. What do you say?"

"I say go; it is a beautiful evening for a drive," and as I finished I saw Mrs. Redmond at the door.

She greeted us cheerily and then, turning her head to one side, she began, "I came in to see if I couldn't get a nice man to take me for a drive such a lovely evening. If I wasn't married I think I might be able to get out oftener."

"Why, my dear girl," replied Alex, "that's just what Joe and I have been planning."

"Well, then you are two dear, good men! But how can three of us go in one buggy?"

"We intended to hire a double rig and take both you and Vickie."

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"Vickie has been out all the afternoon with Fattie, and now she has a headache and is as cross as a bear with a sore head, and won't come out of her room."

"Well, if a drive affects girls that way I guess we better not go," said Alex.

"Oh, but I'll have a different man along," laughed Mrs. Redmond.

"Well, say, if Miss Bliss can't come, I believe I'll go round and see if Miss Smith will accompany us, if it is agreeable to you folks," I ventured.

"That would be just lovely," said Mrs. Redmond. "I was talking to Sadie only a few minutes before I came in, and she wants a drive in the country as much as I do, I know."

I hastened around to Mrs. Johnston's and Sadie said that she could be ready in a few minutes, so I returned by the livery, got a team and surrey, and in another jiffy I pulled up at the barber shop, driving a spanking team of greys. Alex and his wife climbed into the back seat, I turned the horses' heads towards Mrs. Johnston's cottage, and in another moment I had Sadie, as fresh as a morning-glory, seated by my side. As we passed Alex's house Mrs. Redmond ran in to tell Vickie that we would not be back until late, and advised her to go to bed and try and get some sleep.

She was soon back, however, and in her place, and away we sped up the winding hill to the prairie

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level beyond. The evening air seemed to intoxicate us with the joy of it. The winding trail now led us between bluffs of poplar trees which here dotted the prairie; then swinging around a little willow-fringed lake or slough, covered with water-fowl; next, through the long grass or the new-mown hay of a prairie meadow; then up again to the higher prairie land, covered with short, sweet, grass and flowers in wild profusion. Here the gophers sported in the evening sunshine, standing, as we approached, like so many sentinels around their hilly homes.

Then a prairie chicken, with her young brood, would rise and fly only a few yards out of the way, and hide themselves in the grass or bushes. Then, through vast fields of wheat the trail led us, every stem plump and ready to burst out with a few more days of the glorious sunshine: the very life of the West depending upon those slender stems of the bread-plant. Another half mile, and we encountered a large herd of cattle in charge of an English herd-boy. The herd was lying across the trail, many of them across the wheel-ruts, so I gave a loud yell and let the horses speed on. The whole herd rose at my yell and parted before us. The fat steers, lowering their heads to the ground, arched their necks and bellowed in notes of resentful anger. The young English lad, only recently from the streets of London, stood gazing at us as we passed on.

We had kept to the well-beaten trail, but, when

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nearly seven miles out, I turned our horses' heads eastward, intending to circle round and return by another main trail, and thus we would pass close to the scene of the tragedy. The ladies, of course, were in blissful ignorance of our intention, but when I turned into the main trail, about dusk, I said to Alex, "This is the place."

"What place?" asked Mrs. Redmond, looking inquiringly at Alex. He hesitated, not knowing what to say, and I also remained silent, remembering at that moment that Sadie probably knew the place well. But Mrs. Redmond continued, "Wasn't it somewhere out here that Roland was shot?"

"Yes," I confessed, "this was his farm. 'Twas in the field just around this bluff, where he was plowing that fatal afternoon."

"'Twas a terrible thing," she went on. "I don't see how men can live away out on the prairie all alone." "They said he didn't intend to live alone much longer," explained Alex.

Previous to this conversation Sadie had been in the best of spirits, but now she sat by my side in perfect silence. I looked at her pityingly, and was trying to think of some way of changing the subject, when we were all startled by the loud neigh of a horse, apparently from the bluff ahead.

"What's that?" both ladies exclaimed in unison. As I looked in the direction from which the sound came I saw the figure of a man walking in a stooped

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position as though he were searching for something. The others had evidently seen him, too, ere he dropped into concealment among the low willow bushes near the bluff.

Disappearing like that out of our sight in the dusk, his action seemed rather suspicious, and on the impulse of the moment I turned my horses off of the trail and galloped towards the timber. Before we reached it, however, a horse and buggy dashed out of an opening between the trees and in the buggy we plainly saw (as he passed within ten feet of us) Mr. Davis. But Sadie also recognized the man, though she knew him not as Davis, and in excitement and terror she grasped me by the arm and shrieked in my ear, "It is Arthur Roland! the man I told you of!" I wheeled my horses round, but found that he had passed out of sight in the growing darkness.

"It was certainly Davis," declared Alex. "I wonder what he was doing here? He told me that he was going to Winnipeg on the nineteen-twenty train."

"And he did go," said Mrs. Redmond. "I saw him enter the train just as it moved out, and he waved his hand to me and I was glad to see the last of him."

"He looked as if he were looking for something he had lost," I suggested. "He must have left the train at Rowville and hired a horse there to get here by this time." "There is another train at 22-30," I re-

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marked, glancing at my watch, "and it is now 21-45. I have forty-five minutes to catch that train," and I immediately turned our horses' heads toward town.

I felt moved by some impelling force, and I gave the horses the reins. The only noise disturbing the stillness of the night was the regular sound of the horses' hoofs on the hard-beaten trail, and the buzz of the buggy-wheels. As we reached the top of the hill I could see the headlight of the engine in the distance. The stars were now shining bright and clear and above the light of the engine glowed the evening star. I looked down upon the town in the valley and saw the twinkling lights, yellow and red and green, and, as I watched, Sadie said softly, "Isn't it beautiful?" "What?" I asked. "Why," she replied, "the lights above and the lights below. Wasn't that what you were thinking of just now?" "Yes," I admitted, "I was thinking of the Lights of God and the lights of man." "The lights of men are only imitations of the Lights of God," she answered. "That's so, dear," I whispered, "and man's love is also the imitation of the love of God." "Love is the greatest of the Lights above and the Lights below," she replied. "Without the light of love the material world would be only mockery and life would be folly."

I drove direct to the station, and throwing the lines to Alex, ran for the train, and in another minute I was on my way to Rowville.

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As the train pulled into the station I stood on the lower step of the car and before it had stopped I was walking along the platform. Only a few passengers were taking this late train, but among them I plainly saw the bulky form of Davis. I stepped up to him quickly and said, "Hello, Roland! I thought you had gone to Winnipeg."

He turned pale and trembled, as if expecting to be arrested on the spot, but seeing no policeman about he regained his composure and explained that he had stayed off at Rowville on business. In another moment he had stepped aboard, and the train moved away and was soon lost in the darkness. I had seen enough to be convinced that that train carried the slayer of Jim Roland.

Late as it was I went to the livery stable and found the liveryman rubbing down a horse. "Your horse looks as though it had had a lively trip," I remarked. "He certainly has. That old duffer must have driven as if all hell was after him." "Perhaps it was," I replied, "but say, can you drive me home to-night, Bill?" "Yes, sir," was the quick response, and I can be ready in twenty minutes;" and, true to his word, twenty minutes later pulled up at the Western Hotel where I was waiting. I stepped into the buggy and away we sped into the darkness.

"This is the same buggy the old gent had out," he said, apologizing for the mud and dust on the floor and seat of the buggy. At that moment I felt

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something under my heel, and reaching down, I picked up from the buggy's bottom a small book. I slipped it into my pocket, thinking it might be something Davis had lost, and, after arriving home, alone in my room, I examined its contents. It proved to be Davis's property, and among other entries was the address of Mrs. John Bliss, 313 _____ street, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Early the next morning I sought out Alex and told him of having seen Davis at Rowville, and of speaking to him. I then showed him the little book I had found in the buggy. I asked Alex if he remembered Davis saying, on the previous evening, that it was his first visit to our town, and yet the liveryman assured me that he had taken out a horse and rig last fall.

"It's my opinion that he knows something of the Roland affair," said Alex. "I can't imagine what else would have taken him out there last night. Why was the horse hid in the bluff, and why was he in such a hurry to depart when we came on the scene?"

"It is my opinion," I returned, "that he must have lost something, which, if found, would incriminate him, and he was out there on an expedition of discovery, and I don't think he found the object of his search; he left too hurriedly for that."

"Well, Joe, if I were you I would send for a policeman and finish the search. You better let me

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have that note-book and I will see if Vickie can identify it. She and Davis, you know, are engaged, and though she has tried to break it off several times he won't hear of it, and I really believe the girl is afraid of him. Only yesterday he compelled her to consent to an early marriage and I guess that was the cause of her headache last night."

I gave him the note-book and turned to go.

"If you make any find out there, Joe, let me know this evening, and you can have the note-book back. It looks to me as if you were going to save the poor girl from a life of misery."

I hastened away and phoned to police headquarters for assistance in making the search. In due time I started for the Roland Farm with the same police who had answered the call the night of the murder. He knew the spot where the body was found. I pointed out to him the position of Davis when he had dropped in the bushes the previous evening, and there we began our search among the red willows and long grass which covered the ground at this place.

Not knowing what to look for, we turned over every chip, stone, or piece of bark, and it was after several hours of such searching, sometimes upon our hands and knees, that we were at last rewarded.

The policeman calmly remarked, "Well, I guess I have it," as he held up a gold watch to view. It was one of those beautiful calendar watches, and,

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upon examination we found that it had ceased to tick on October 31st, at 3 A. M. We opened the back case and there we discovered the name, Arthur S. Roland. The watch had evidently stopped the night after Jim Roland was shot.

"But who can Arthur S. Roland be? the name of the murdered man was James Roland, was it not?" asked the policeman. I told him of Miss Smith, assuring him that she would be able to establish the identity of Arthur Roland. and, upon arriving in town, we went straight to Mrs. Johnston's. That lady seemed rather frightened upon seeing a policeman enter her house. Sadie, however, was not in the least excited, and, upon being shown the watch, at once pronounced it the property of Arthur S. Roland of Windsor, Ontario. She also declared it to have been that gentleman whom we had seen the previous evening, and also informed us that she had recognized him the day he had come to town, she being on the same train.

We thanked Miss Smith for the information and, departing, met Alex on his way from the barber shop. We allowed him to inspect the watch and informed him as to the real name of Davis, when he exclaimed. "Joe, you have enough evidence to swing him!"

The policeman, after cautioning us against giving any information to the public, left us, retaining possession of the watch and taking also the note-book

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with him. Alex pressed me to accompany him to supper, that we might inform the ladies, because, he declared, Vickie must know.

Alex now informed me that Mrs. Redmond had told Vickie in the morning of having seen Davis the previous evening at the Roland Farm, and she recognized the note-book as his property, but she had treated the matter in stolid indifference. "In fact," said Alex, "we can't understand her lack of emotion, because she understands the suspicion which these circumstances would arouse. The only thing that doesn't seem right, Joe, is the lack of a motive for the committing of such a crime."

"Well," said I, "there was a lady in the case." "A lady!" exclaimed Alex, standing still. "Why, they said Jim Roland was to have married Sadie Smith."

"And do you mean to insinuate that Sadie Smith is not a lady?" I demanded, facing him.

"She certainly is; but do you mean to say that she had been acquainted with Davis, too?"

"No," I replied, "she was engaged to Arthur S. Roland before coming here from Ontario. But mind you, not one word of this to anybody except your wife and Miss Bliss."

We were now at Alex's home, and after supper, we told the ladies all we knew of the case. When we finished, Vickie said, seeming to forget my presence, "Well, Alice, I am glad I did what I did last night." "Why, girl, what did you do?" asked Mrs

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Redmond. "I wrote him a letter while you were gone, and told him that I would never be his wife. I also returned his ring," saying which she held up her finger for her sister's inspection.

After supper I returned to the barber shop with Alex. "Well," said he, "you certainly have enough evidence to hang Davis or Roland, or whatever his name is."

"All the evidence I have, Alex, is only circumstantial and I intend to use this set of circumstances against the other circumstances and thus clear Ray of the charge against him. And when I have done that I have done my duty. I have nothing to do with the conviction of Roland-Davis, even if it were possible."

I bade him good-night, and turned to go, intending to call on Sadie Smith again, so that we could talk everything over by ourselves. But lo, there stood Dr. Kirk, square in my pathway! My heart jumped as I thought of the opportune time of his visit, and right there I realized that I wished him every success. I then was sure that my mind and my emotions had united, and it was a restful union to me. Yes, Sadie Smith was my choice, and at that moment I thought again of the joining of the waters and down there by the riverbank I built my mansion, I sat on the veranda with my loved one at my side, and watched our children playing on the lawn. Again I heard in fancy sweet strains of

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music, mingled with the voice of my love, come floating down from the future. I saw, I heard, I felt, and then trembled lest it could not be.

I introduced the doctor to Alex, explaining that he was an old friend of Miss Bliss, and after a short conversation, as he and Alex seemed quite friendly, I excused myself, mentioning that we could fix that business up in the morning. I went straight to Sadie Smith, who seemed to be expecting me. "I thought you would return," said she. "Why did you think so?" I queried. "Oh, I don't know, but somehow I always seem to know when you are coming."

"You're not taking up with Spiritualism again?" I asked, in a playful tone.

"No," she frowned, "I suppose it must be mental telepathy." "And did you get all my message?" "I'm not going to tell any secrets." "Did the message say that I wanted you to come for a walk this evening?" "No, it did not, but if you wish it I would be glad to go," she answered. "Get your hat on, then," I said nervously, and as she left the room for her hat I called after her, "Bring your cloak, too, Sadie, it may be damp before we get back." It was the first time I had addressed her by her name, and when the sound of my voice died away I was glad that she could not see my face.

In a few minutes she had reappeared, and standing in the doorway, announced that she was ready.

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I will never forget her as she appeared on that occasion. My eyes feasted on her beauty, and what puzzled me was, that I had never thought her so beautiful before. I seemed to have only at that moment fully realized it, and as I looked, I felt a feeling of proprietorship in her which seemed delightfully strange. I stepped to her side and would have taken her in my arms, but she, seeming to divine my thoughts, tripped down the steps and out to the gate, I following close behind. She opened the gate and stood aside for me to pass out, which I did, feeling as though we had changed places. My deliberate calmness had deserted me, but she seemed cool and collected enough to manage both herself and me. She closed the gate and turned her steps away from the village, never asking me which way we would go, and I walked by her side like a child guided by its parents.

On we went, like two children wandering away from home, she always seeming to be just a little ahead of me, until I found we had reached the river. It was the same spot where she and Vickie had discovered me months before, so I led her to where I sat on that occasion and seated her upon the grass. I now felt as if I had regained myself, and, after a few moments, I managed to collect my thoughts enough to ask her why she had thought that I was coming to her this evening.

"Because," she answered, "I got your thought-

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message." Then added, "You read my letter to your father eleven years ago. Why shouldn't I read your thoughts to-night?"

I looked at her aghast and echoed, "You read my letter eleven years ago! Sadie, what do you mean? You're not the Sarah Smith who wrote that letter I told you of?"

"Yes, Joe, I'm the same Sarah Smith."

"My Sarah Smith?" I gasped as I drew my arm around her; and the answer came, deliberate, sweet, and low, "Yes, Joe, *your* Sarah Smith," as her arm went round my neck and she drew me down till our lips met. I held her there in perfect silence, and in that embrace our souls seemed to unite even as the streams were gliding into one a little farther down. When I at last released her, I reminded her of the place where we were, and asked her if she remembered the lessons from Nature's book and the joining of the waters. "Do I remember?" she asked, through tears of joy. "I shall never forget to all eternity."

"Well, this is a beautiful spot," I declared; "the most sacred spot in all the world, henceforth, to me, and I feel like Peter on the Mount when he said. 'It is good to be here; let us build three Tabernacles.' "

"We only want one," broke in Sadie, "for where you worship, I will worship; whither thou goest I will go; where thou dwellest I will dwell; thy people

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shall be my people and thy God shall be my God."

"Even so be it," I answered, "but here we will build our home and here we shall dwell, so that often we may come here and sit on this spot and renew our love."

"Do you think it will need renewing?" she asked shyly. "No, dear, I think with us it will be an everlasting flame," I replied, again taking her in my arms.

"But how did you ever manage to keep the secret of that letter from me?" I asked, again thinking of the fact.

"Oh," she replied, "do you think I was going to tell you before I was sure of your love? You see, Joe, you didn't think I was old enough to have written it, and if I had told you then you would have thought that I was an old maid; but you don't know how old I am, and when I tell you, perhaps you won't love me as much." She said this as a challenge and as a confession. I took the challenge, and drawing her closer told her that I thought she was plenty old enough to be my wife.

"Well, Joe, I was nineteen when I wrote that letter, eleven years ago, and I told your father in that letter that I wanted to go West, and now I know why I wanted to come."

Then, changing her mood, she caught me by the ear and said, "You naughty boy! you should have come after me when your father got that letter from

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me and saved me all the trouble I have gone through to find you. But now I have found you. I'm not going to let you go," and thus saying, again threw her arms around my neck. She then suddenly jumped to her feet and declared that it was time we were getting home, so in the friendly darkness we retraced our steps to Mrs. Johnston's.

We had not gone far, however, till we heard subdued tones, and I was sure I could distinguish the low buzz of Dr. Kirk's voice. We passed on, unobserved, however, and entered Mrs. Johnston's parlor, where the light burned low until the wee small hours. But even when I had departed on my way home I could see a faint glimmering light at Alex Redmond's home, and I concluded that Dr. Kirk would not be round to disturb me very early in the morning for the transaction of that business he had mentioned in Regina. And in this my anticipations were correct.

I now sought my lodgings and retired, but sleep came not, for over and over again the events of the evening came tumbling into my mind. A new, sweet influence had entered my life, to adorn it, yes, to sanctify it, with the holy unction of love. Again I thought of the Septem of Love. I had taken another degree; it had created a new Heaven, and I felt that when morning dawned I would behold a new Earth. Yes, the knowledge of reciprocated love I felt had created all things anew, and in this state of mind

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I at last fell asleep, and was thus borne to those realms of delight invisible to the natural eye, but none the less real—for all is real which we realize.

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CHAPTER V.

THE GATES OF EDEN—THE GARDEN OF WISDOM AND
THE HOSTS OF MICHAEL.

JUST as my eyes closed and the temporal world faded to dimness, I remembered that the mystic eye caught glimpses of the mystic world, and, in my eagerness to explore those hills and vales of mystic thought the temporal was entirely forgotten, save that ever by my side, filling my heart with joy, glided the form of my beloved.

Under such conditions, rest of the body seemed complete, because the mind was not only at rest, but was in rapture. Distance and time faded from our thoughts, for life perpetual and full had dawned upon our vision. And while thus we wandered along the banks of the Crystal River of Life we saw some one approaching. As he came nearer we discerned the form of a stalwart man, majestic and grand.

Addressing us in a friendly manner, he asked from whence we had come and if we had entered the Garden of Wisdom that we might receive instruction? I replied that we were not so much as aware that this was the Garden of Wisdom, but we assured

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him that to receive instruction was our greatest desire, if any would be so kind as to teach us.

"I know," he began, "that the world from which you have so recently come and in which you wait is yet in great darkness; but the command has gone forth that light must shine, and the whole exterior is being filled with the glory of the strong-voiced messenger, and with great authority he is proclaiming the overthrow of Great Babylon (political, commercial and ecclesiastical discord). But men are wedded to their theories, and, though the light shines in the darkness, the lovers of darkness, discerning the light, fight it, because they see the shadows. And because their eyes are accustomed to the darkness they cry 'Away with the light! we want it not.' But you, my friends, are beloved because you love the light and unto him that hath shall be given. You have comprehended the Septem of God's love and now shall receive knowledge, which, being united with that love in you, ye shall increase in wisdom. For this reason you have been instructed and enticed into these gardens."

"We entered, sir, because we saw that it was a goodly land and our hearts were filled with joy as we trod its paths."

"Your hearts are filled with love, and love is the beginning of wisdom, and wisdom is the source of eternal joy."

"Sir," said I, seeming to perceive at that mo-

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ment a former difficulty which I had never before been able to understand, "it is wisdom we desire, so that our reasoning shall not be like placing an article into one side of a balance without any weight in the other side."

"Friends," he replied, "I perceive that you are determined to walk in paths of righteousness and truth, and such determination accompanied by wisdom, becomes the greatest lever of progress towards a higher civilization for the human family. You do well to seek wisdom, because that same determination, accompanied by ignorance, produces the stubborn zeal, bigoted and intolerant. This latter is the folly of Lucifer, and his stubborn heart cannot be overcome except by the universal acceptance of truth through the earth and thus made perceptible to the fallen hosts."

"Noble Sir," I began, "we perceive that you are filled with the wisdom of the wise. Therefore, we entreat you that you will instruct us in all that we are able to understand."

"Tell me that which you desire to know and I will gladly instruct you. Ask and it shall be given; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Then said I, "Good Sir, if we have minds capable of understanding, pray tell us the purpose of evil and why it seems to triumph over good; and tell us if good shall triumph over evil in the end?"

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"The end of what?" he inquired, smiling tenderly upon us, and instantly the answer came into my soul, and I answered, "the end of evil, the end of sin, the end of death."

"Yes," he repeated, "the end of sin, and its consequent evil, pain and death; all else is eternal. But first must come the end of ignorance."

"But why was sin allowed to wreck humanity and lead astray a third of heaven's hosts?" "Ah, that was a divine mystery, that we, even, could not understand till Michael burst the bars of death and revealed to us the mystery of life. And now the time approaches when the outer portions of the earth shall understand. Sin," he continued, "is but the blundering action of an ignorant soul in the process of learning the laws of life. Evil is but the consequent effect of that wrong action called sin, so you will understand that what appears evil becomes an ultimate good, because it warns the soul of coming disaster, that it may escape a greater distress.

"The development of knowledge in Godlike individuals necessitated the manifestation of sin by its evil effect upon all. So you see the end of sin signifies the universal understanding of truth. And ere that can be accomplished, Lucifer and his hosts must be restrained, that their deceptions shall no more becloud the mind of man; and the method of restraint is to give man the knowledge of their methods and their power."

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"You have made those points very plain, sir," said Sadie, as she stood there by my side, "but it yet puzzles me to understand the beginning of life at all." "Ah," he replied, "that is the first and the last question to be asked. It is the first, because the source of all life was first. It is the last, because when understood by all intelligent creatures all things will be explainable.

"Michael was the first material manifestation of conscious life in the earth; also shall be last, because in him are all things which have physical form. He desired associates and we were the creations of his thought and will, and we became his co-workers in all the earth. We became creators because thought creates. It is the moving energy of life, the moulding power, so that which we thought became moulded into physical form. Thus were the plants, the trees, the fish, the birds, and animals created or formed, each new kind the product of a thought and each advance suggested by the limitations of that which preceded it, or by our own new surroundings. Thus, step by step, we ourselves progressed with all creation, each species of the creature but the registration of our wisdom at the time when it appeared. He was the root and the stock of the tree of life. The plants, shrubs, fishes, birds, beasts, man, and angels, are but the branches of the tree, each species a separate sprout of the main stock, so that all live by him.

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"And there was great rejoicing among us when man walked forth, the climax of this progression. Made of the earth, earthy, but in the image of us all; a little lower than us because he was limited, as was all previous creation, by the love and admiration of the female, herself the emblem of his love as he of our wisdom.

"But so that you may comprehend the good of evil I must tell now of Lucifer, the bearer of the light and the dispenser of knowledge among the heavenly hosts."

"Sir," said I, "to us you seem to speak in contradictions. In the world from whence we came we never thought that evil was any good, or that Lucifer could dispense any real knowledge. But you speak of the good of evil and we cannot comprehend."

"Ah, my friends," he replied, "a little knowledge will produce but little wisdom, which leaves great room for faith; a large amount of knowledge will produce a large harvest of doubts and little faith; while perfect knowledge produces rest and love and glory. Upon that tree of knowledge from which the human mother plucked the fruit, were seven varieties. She took but one."

"Sir," said I, "it was the tree of evil. Do you mean that there are six other evils to come?" "Ah," he answered, "do you remember what I said about a little knowledge producing little wisdom? Now mark, the tree was not the tree of evil. It was the

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tree of knowledge. Yes, knowledge of good and knowledge of evil; but note again the good comes first and then the evil, and the evil only appears because we misused the good."

"Then what, sir, is the good of evil?" asked Sadie.

"What is the lash to the stubborn ox?" he asked. "Is it not evil, though his driver would hasten him out of the miry slough? But to his driver it is good. The ox knew not his danger, the driver did, and the evil of that lash was good even for the ox. Just so with many, the evil or bad effects of his actions become good, just so soon as they cause him to seek the right and, as the proverb expresses it, the burnt child learns to dread the fire.

"The fruit partaken of by our first parents gave them the knowledge of sex, and from that knowledge developed both good and evil. The good is at all times enveloping the evil and turning it to good account."

"Then good shall at last triumph over evil!" I exclaimed in joy.

"Not exactly that," he replied, "but as good is the consequence of action in harmony with Universal Law, just so evil is the consequence of an action out of harmony with that law; and as men's actions are determined by the extent of their knowledge, it is only by a perfect knowledge of the laws governing their being that they can be sure that the result of their actions will always produce good effects.

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And when, in the wisdom of God, the knowledge of these laws shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, then evil will no longer be the consequence of ignorance; but if evil appears it will be the effect of a wilful act of rebellion against God and the laws of His kingdom. And the one continuing in that rebellion will eventually bring upon himself the second death and eternal oblivion. On the other hand, the keeper of the laws of that kingdom shall know not the pangs of death, but shall forever enjoy the good resulting from right action."

"Kind Sir," I asked, "are we to understand that each individual creates his own happiness in that kingdom?" "Yes, that is it," he made reply, "and even so do the actions of his will create his own misery and sadness."

"Then how, kind Sir, may we understand the laws of the kingdom?" asked Sadie. "Ah," he replied, "I perceive that thy feet may tread the paths of this Garden of Wisdom. Ye have already accepted the first law of love, and unto those who love it is given to understand the mysteries of our God. Come, follow me," and saying thus, turned and walked in the direction from whence he had come.

I looked down into the depth of Sadie's eyes, and saw that her soul was filled with unspeakable joy. Taking her by the hand we followed our guide.

We had gone some distance when he stopped before a beautiful tree and growing thereon were sev-

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eral different kinds of fruit. He pointed to it and said, "Behold the Tree of Knowledge, and its seven kinds of fruit." I gazed in wonder upon the tree and saw upon the mammoth trunk grew seven limbs, and on each limb a different kind of fruit. "Why," I shouted in wondering joy, "that's like the Septem of Love!" At once I knew in my soul that it conveyed the same lessons to my mind, and I looked at our guide inquiringly.

"The fruit of the tree seemeth to be good for food," I said, "may we eat of it?"

"Yes, now ye may eat of it all, for knowledge with love giveth wisdom." And joyfully I plucked some of each variety, and tasting it, I found it good. I gave also some of it to Sadie, who pronounced it delightful to the taste. As I ate, question after question crowded into my mind, and I straightway asked our guide to tell us first of Lucifer, the bearer of the light, the dispenser of knowledge. How and why was it he became rebellious against the rule of Michael?

"That is a question we speak of with pity," he began, "yes, even with sadness, because it was first a blunder on his part. I have before stated that evil was the consequence of wrong action and Lucifer, not knowing the full consequence of his action, blundered into sin, wandered away even as he who would first attempt the unknown mountain pass. We thought when man was fashioned in our image that

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creation was complete, and when from out of man the woman came, our eyes were dazzled with her beauty. Such form and grace of figure were beyond our best conception. To look upon such wondrous beauty of form was to think of love and rest, and thus Lucifer, seeing the glory of her beauty, yearned for her possession, and, seeking her when wandering alone in this garden, 'tis said that he beguiled her, seeking the sensations of the flesh rather than those of the intellect. Thus falling from his high estate he ceased to be the bearer of the light, telling the innocent woman that she was the limit of the handiwork of the Elihume. Told her that she should be as the gods, and know material sensations, and she, partaking of the fruit of that Tree of Knowledge and finding it pleasant to the taste, gave also to the man, her partner, and he, partaking, was satisfied. Yes, satisfied in the perfection of bodily form of the woman. And that satisfaction arrested any further evolution or change in the human form. The same thing happened now in the case of humanity which before we had observed of other animals. When the dual sex appeared the species became definitely set on account of their desire, one for the other.

The evil effects of Lucifer's admiration for the woman were at that time not very apparent, and so it transpired that, as man began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and many daughters were born unto them, that many from among us, looking upon

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the daughters of men and seeing that they were fair to look upon, took them as their wives, such as they would.

"But, long ere this Michael had seen the evil result of the deeds of Lucifer and had commanded us that we drive the human pair out of this Garden of Life. So he drove him hence to the outer parts of the earth, where life was not perpetual, but where in due time they would again return to the earth from which they were taken. And to these outer portions of the earth went also Lucifer and all the sons of God who followed in his footsteps, for the daughters of men were beautiful in their sight.

"But Michael still proclaimed progress and advancement as the law of life and pointed to the heights of being yet to be attained. In fact, the very desolation wrought by the actions of Lucifer was but another opportunity to lift the creature man into a higher plane of life; and at once the hosts of Michael began the work of proclaiming hope to the hearts of men.

"A restoration into life was promised by Michael, and mockingly ridiculed by Lucifer, who now proclaimed the collapse of the controlling power of the Father of all life."

"I remember reading in the book of Genesis," I said, "that the sons of God looked upon the daughters of men and saw that they were fair, and they took them wives as they would; but were the angels

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the sons of God? and if so, what was the nature of their being?"

"In the book you mention is recorded the story of their fall and the consequent corruption of mankind, and their expulsion from this Paradise within the earth."

"Within the earth!" I repeated. "Is this beautiful land within the earth?"

"Most certainly," he replied. "This is Paradise, the Garden of Eden, which meaneth the Garden of Life, because here all life began, all forms developed."

"Then how, kind Sir, did they migrate to the exterior portions of the earth?" I pleaded.

"Through the gateways of this Eden man was driven forth, and other creatures followed in his path. Through these openings also Lucifer was driven hence. We passed out and in at will. Save when an angel sinned, he could no more return hither. At these gates the light of the interior life warned them back, as though an angel stood and flashed a flaming sword. These openings are still at the ends of the earth and through the northern gate we brought you hither."

"This is truly wonderful, sir, but I have always understood that the Garden of Eden was in Asia."

"If you had reasoned," he replied, "you would have known that such a thought was folly, because, as you have read, man was driven out of the Garden

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of Eden, so that being cut off from the source of life he might die. The Garden was not destroyed nor is the source of life in Asia. Eden was this Paradise wherein existence is eternal. But, that your understanding may be perfected, I must further inform you as to the physical conditions of that outer world when man was driven forth.

"You will no doubt remember that the statement is made in the book of Genesis that God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters and let it divide the waters from the waters; and God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so'; and God called the firmament Heaven, and in this firmament, or Heaven, moved the angelic hosts. Our bodies are material, but so charged with life that we moved in that heaven on the wings of thought.

"The waters above, and the waters and the earth beneath were subject to our control. The great sun poured his light into the upper waters and its reflection spread over the whole surface of the earth. The sky was one vast shining brightness, only a slight difference appearing 'twixt night and day.

"The life, and its consequent heat and light, went forth from this interior through those hollow poles, and, held beneath that friendly canopy of vapor, developed one vast garden around the earth. Plant and animal life were abundant everywhere—vegetation,

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of which man had not dreamed, and animals gigantic. They were our creations and they were also our delight.

"Picture if you can that new home of Humanity—that creature, fashioned after our image, but of denser body than we—suited to tread the earth as we were to move in heaven. We could descend to men, but they could not ascend to us, and, for some sixteen hundred years these were the conditions in which man dwelt upon the earth, and under such conditions death was slow to claim dominion over men.

"Thus, as time went on, the statements of Lucifer more and more gained credence among the heavenly hosts, and one by one they followed in his train, descending that they might enjoy those fair daughters of the human race; and they bare them children, as also is recorded in the book, where it declares that there were giants in the earth in those days. And also, after that, when the sons of God went in unto the daughters of men and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were, of old, men of renown. These sons of the disobedient were called the Neptli, or children of the gods, for we were gods. They became renowned for their great strength; and the wonderful deeds they performed were narrated in wonder and dread wherever the sons of men gathered together. They fought with wild beasts, and overcame dragons by the power of

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their might, and the cunning of their minds, and lo. the sons of men trembled at their approach.

"Lo, looking now upon the change which he had wrought, Lucifer, proud prince, declared that he had conquered. But Michael's plans were laid before our life was given, and now the time was ripe that the firmament should fall and thus destroy the heaven in which we angels moved. Lucifer was angered at this strategem and led his hosts against the hosts of Michael. Then war was waged in heaven and bitter was the heart of Lucifer when he, and all his hosts, were cast down to the earth by the falling of the waters. The hosts of Michael entered once again the gates of Paradise and held those gates against the assault of Lucifer. Thus those angels who kept not their first estate, leaving their own habitation, and going after strange flesh, were, with corrupt mankind, strangled in the waters of the flood. And, losing thus their material forms, in the darkness of their spirit life they dwell chained, as it were, from practicing their lewdness, till Michael once again shall test their loyalty to righteousness.

"But man was warned before those fountains of the deep were broken up, before Heaven's window was opened wide above the Southern gate to Paradise, and poured the condensing water on the earth, and, rushing northward in their course, to flood the earth, carried in their bosom earth, to roll out continents

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anew, and trees to bury deep beneath the mud and sand, thus making coal for man to warm his hearth, beneath the new conditions.

"One man he warned, and he, a perfect sample of the race,

His blood had flowed direct from Adam's veins.

"He was truly human in his life line, being perfect in all his generations; and this man Michael had chosen to be the progenitor of the new race. I was sent to inform him of the coming catastrophe and instruct him as to the building of a great ship which would carry him over the flood of waters. I went and dwelt with him and furnished him with plans to build by, and when the ship was completed I called some helpers from among the hosts of heaven and we went forth and gathered together all the animals we wished to save from among the numerous kinds which moved upon the surface of the earth--a pair of each. We wished to generate their kind in the new earth when the waters had abated. To him I was instructed to proclaim the will of Michael respecting human restoration, and the re-peopling of the earth; and when the flood began I, with my own hand, shut him in and fixed the door, and all the ship, so that no sinful angel could get aboard. Because, 'twas Michael's will that all such should perish in the waters.

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"So Noah and his family floated on the bosom of the flood, ever driven northward by the rushing of the waters. And when the flood at last would seek its level round the earth, we moored his gallant ship upon a mountain, and, opening wide the door, we led him forth again upon the earth and told him to subdue it.

"But now he looked upon a world of desolation. The beautiful groves and vineyards were no more; the grassy glades had given place to muddy flats; every hollow still retained to its brim the salty water of the sea, but now began to cut the channels deep of the rivers yet to be.

"Then Lucifer called a council of the fallen hosts whose bodies perished in the waters of the flood, and thus addressed them:

"'Comrades and fellow-captives (for this is what in truth we really are), we have tasted of the vengeful wrath of Michael, and now ye know the spirit of spiteful hatred which controlled him that he should retain us here within this spirit darkness. See how he, in his anger and determination to accomplish his designs upon us, has thus destroyed the work he planned himself! Yes, he has destroyed the earth in which we took delight. The heavens also he hath cast down. And on the surface of the earth remain eight souls alone of all the millions. Let us endeavor therefore to take possession of their hearts and wills, that they believe not the promises of

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Michael nor trust his word. You know of old he told them the soul who did our counsel he must die. Now listen to my counsel.

"See yonder in the heavens how the moon and stars illumine the night, and how the sun pours forth his light by day. Now, let us point to these great lights and prove to man that Michael was a liar. He has declared that the soul that sinneth it shall die, but let us point to these lights which now appear in heaven and tell them that they are the Spirits of the Ancients which have passed into a glorious life in heaven with the Gods. Let us tell them that there is no death; that what they look upon as death is but a glorious change, and that henceforth the dead do dwell in heaven."

"They all indorsed his plans and praised him for his cunning.

"Then Jupiter advised that the brightest star should bear the names of the greatest among them. The sun to be the light of Lucifer.

"Again they all agreed, and Lucifer declared that in reward for his wisdom Jupiter should have the brightest star. Mars was wont to raise objection to this, but was consoled by being granted second place. After that each fallen god chose out his star, to represent him in the Heavens.

"Now Ham, the son of Noah, became rebellious against the will and teachings of his father, and Lucifer used his art of spirit influence to widen

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still the breach 'twixt Noah and his son. Ham arose with all his children and, settling in the plains of Babylon, began the building of the city of that name. And Nimrod, son of Cush, who was the son of Ham, became a mighty man in all that land. Then, in the desire to found a mighty kingdom, he sought the advice of Lucifer and his confederates; sought them through the mediumship of the secret chambers. The secret of success in gaining power, they told him, was to keep the masses of the people ignorant so that thus the wise ruler could sway them at his will; and the better to assist the wise to rule they should understand all occult laws of spirit influence. Lucifer was prepared to teach these laws through the spirit medium, but Mammon did insist that the seeker after power should honor him by a suitable reward unto the medium."

"Sir," said I, "it is a proverb among us unto this day that knowledge is power." "Ah," he made reply, "that proverb is a truth in the world from whence you come, but don't forget that the wise and cunning can only retain their power and influence while the masses lie in ignorance. You see, if all the children of men were equally wise, then each would be compelled to rule himself alone. Under such conditions the black arts of Lucifer would have no power to deceive because all would understand his artful sorceries."

"Sir," I said, again, "I perceive that to save the

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world from sin and sorrow all the inhabitants thereof must know the laws of God by learning the wisdom of Michael. And how shall it be given?"

"Thou art right, beloved son of man. By universal knowledge Lucifer, the Prince of Darkness, shall be chained. By universal knowledge of the laws of life shall Michael found his rulership of Love. And he alone shall be proved worthy to rule the hearts of men because he giveth his wisdom unto all and withholdeth it not from any. And willingly they all shall give him praise and honor and he shall be the Lord of all the earth, for his knowledge shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

"Good Sir, I love thy wisdom!" I exclaimed, "but how, oh, how, can all the world learn this wisdom? The Church has labored nigh two thousand years and there are more heathen in the world now than the whole population of the earth amounted to in those days when Jesus trod the dusty roads of Palestine. And even in the lands in which His glad tidings were first proclaimed the masses of the people walk in darkness still, and the church leaders in all those lands uphold the powers which live upon the people's ignorance. The nations of the world prepare for war and slaughter upon a scale the like of which was never dreamed of before, and men's hearts fail in fear of those things coming on the earth; the blight of doubt and unbelief has cast a shadow over every land and millions even doubt if God exists.

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Whatever way men look they see but gloom and coming trouble."

When I finished he was smiling pityingly upon us. But in another moment he turned, and beckoning us to follow, walked onward through the groves of trees which grew upon the riverbank. We followed, and, after reaching the summit of a hill, he bade us look upon the grove through which we had just passed, and oh, the glory of the sight which met our gaze! There, upon the sloping hillside, and as far as we could see within the grove, were myriads of majestic, happy men. Their beauty and calm demeanor was so striking that I felt like one naked in their sight, and would have hastened from their presence had they not been between us and the gate from which we entered.

Our guide, waving his hand toward the multitude, said, "These be the hosts of Michael and his co-workers in all the earth: to restore the waste places, to bind up the broken-hearted, and set at liberty the captive. They but await command from Michael to begin the work of restitution."

"Sir, I have seen enough," I gasped, "I believe. I love, I trust, in Michael and his hosts; but oh, how long shall it be before these things shall come to pass? the people of the earth await deliverance. Why hold back the restitution army?"

"Man's extremity will be the opportunity of Michael," he replied. "Man thinketh still that he

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himself can govern all the earth and only by dear-bought experience will he learn how foolish was the thought. For just so long as man rules man the selfish man will want to do the ruling. Five times the earth shall circle round the sun ere Lucifer with all his hosts are bound. One circle shall be passed in preparation for the war, and after that the nations of the earth shall weep and wail, for not till that same time was the wrath of Lucifer so great. For these hosts of Michael will cast him down from influence by making known his methods of deception. And when, through Michael's reign, the heavens as of old shall be restored and life again be made perpetual in love,— Yes, when all things are restored save Lucifer, we'll plead with him in love and sympathy, to bend his will beneath the will of Michael, who will then be proven worthy to be king of heaven and Lord of all the earth. For, as through him came all things into life, so also by his wisdom shall all things enter righteousness."

As he spoke, I looked at him in wonder and in awe. When he had finished he raised his hands, and, pointing toward the garden's gate, he informed us that it was time for us to return to the outer world. "At the proper time we will conduct you hither in a chariot of the air, but you must first prepare yourselves in holiness so that your bodies will be able to contain the energy of life in its fullness."

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So now, looking in the direction of the north gate, we willed to go, and instantly, with my arm around Sadie, we were moving rapidly through the air, and, passing out of the hollow pole, we soared above the icy circle round the northern gate, and looking back, we saw the Aurora of glory moving back and forth like the flaming sword of the angel at the gate.

I opened my eyes. The light of the morning sun I found had been shining on the mirror of my dresser, and the reflection had been dancing on my face; but before the full realization of this dawned upon me I saw again that book, "The Septem of Love," on the little table by my bed, and this time the crystal drops were oozing from the latter half of the book also. Then I knew that while my objective mind was at rest in sleep, my subjective mind was absent from the body and had travelled to the gardens of the Wise; and now, as my objective mind again assumed control, the table and the book faded away and vanished from my sight. And at once the subjective mind began to narrate to my objective mind the story of its vision. As my reason grasped the meaning of the wonderful story I trembled with emotion. The certainty I felt in the truth of all I had heard and seen now seemed unshakable.

As I lay there, the history of the past ages as I knew it passed before me in panoramic view, from the folly of Lucifer to the great Flood, its cause and then its consequences; the re-peopling of the new

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earth, the story of the tower of Babel, the rise of the Babylonian power, and the merging of her religious myths and theories into the creeds of all the nations; the stories of the gods and all their wonderful deeds of strength and valor; their wooing and winning of fair women. Then I thought of Daniel's image, with its head of gold and feet of iron and miry clay, and I knew that the present governments of the world were represented by the feet of the image, even as Babylon was its head of gold—all one great system animated and controlled by the power and cunning of Lucifer and his confederates. But the image was to fall and be ground to powder: a new power developed without the aid of human power would govern in its place. Ah, I thought, kingdoms and governments have been overthrown in revolutions during the past and the people thought to set up a righteous and just government, but through the cunning of Lucifer he has always controlled that government by controlling the hearts of men. But the days of Lucifer's dominion were closing and would pass with great noise and trouble. At that time shall Michael stand up, that great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people. And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

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How evident, I thought, that Michael, the archangel of heaven, is he who, being born of Mary, as a son of the human family, was both able and willing to save the race from subjugation to the perverted will of Lucifer: to save it first from death, and then from folly, by giving life and wisdom.

I thought of the great and constant war 'twixt good and evil; of the church's hope to convert the world by the efforts of her instrumentality, and, then, remembering the hosts of Michael the spasmodic efforts of the disunited church seemed worse than folly. It was evident that the work of turning the people of the nations to righteousness would be done by Michael and his hosts and I remembered a verse in Thessalonians. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels." And again, "The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."

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CHAPTER VI.

FLIGHTS OF THOUGHT—GREAT DISCOVERIES AND THE JOYS OF LIFE.

TWAS in a very thoughtful but joyful mood that I dressed and breakfasted that morning. I had so many things to think of and so many reasons why I should be filled with joy.

As I recalled the events of the previous evening thrill after thrill passed through me. My heart beat faster, sending my hot blood coursing through my veins. My breath came with a long, even swell and full of the chest, all seeming to contribute to my physical being a restful feeling of perfect health.

When I thought of Sadie I wanted to go direct to her to again let my eyes rest on her beautiful face and feel the presence of the beautiful soul I now discerned behind her features. Had I been blind that I had not seen it before, or was it the new spirit which had taken possession of me?

When I thought again of the Garden of Wisdom and the noble angel who had conducted us along its paths and through its groves, I found that, instinctively, I was acting as he had acted: with each

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movement of my hand, my step, I found myself endeavoring to hold my head and shoulders in the same noble and dignified position. A certain calm, deliberate manner seemed to dominate me to such an extent that I felt almost as if my personality had been changed during the night, and verily I was not the same: my former self had given place to this new self which seemed to possess so many qualities and feelings never experienced by the old self. This new personality seemed to possess a feminine tenderness never before experienced in my soul. I had entered a new life and had not yet become accustomed to it.

I was sitting in my office, musing thus, when a knock sounded on my door and my assistant announced Dr. Kirk. I told him to show him in and began writing at my desk in an attempt to hide my emotions, because I was afraid he would read all my thoughts and learn all my secrets.

When Kirk entered I drew up a chair for him and, extending my hand, I asked how he was this morning.

I felt that I was acting strangely. When I spoke my voice sounded hollow and far away. And when Kirk spoke he also seemed embarrassed. I was sure that Kirk's feelings were similar to mine. We were both intoxicated, but not with wine.

For some minutes we sat in silence, looking at each other, but at last I blurted out bluntly, "Well, Kirk, how did you succeed last night?"

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"How did I succeed?" he repeated. "Joe, I've won the love of the sweetest girl on earth! To-day everything is new and beautiful and I can scarcely wait until I can see her again."

I looked up at him, expecting to see him laughing at me, because I thought he was attempting to speak for me, but when I saw his features I knew that he was speaking for himself.

When he had finished I told him that I, too, had passed into another degree. He was not surprised, and he then informed me that he and Vickie had seen us pass on ahead of them the previous evening as we were walking toward the river.

Directly after leaving him with Alex Redmond he had gone to Alex's home. Vickie herself met him at the door. She had introduced him to Mrs. Redmond, in her most affable manner, as her old friend, Dr. Kirk, and as Vickie had often mentioned his name to her sister as one of her admirers Mrs. Redmond, after a few words of welcome, had excused herself to perform some household duties. "I had business in town," Kirk began consciously, "and hearing you were visiting your sister I decided to call and see an old friend."

"That was good of you, doctor, not to forget your friends. I would have certainly been offended if I had found out that you had been in town and had not called to see me."

This was certainly encouraging to Kirk, when he

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had feared a rather cool reception, so he ventured farther.

"The pleasure of seeing you, Miss Bliss, is of vastly more importance to me than my business considerations could be." "Really, Dr. Kirk," answered Vickie, "you flatter me, because the business which would bring you here from Regina must be of considerable importance and you say that you consider my friendship of more importance than that?"

"Well, I must admit that my business in town is one of importance, but still it is my greatest pleasure to be here with you, Vickie."

"Your business, I understand, is with Mr. Worthy?"

"Well, yes. That is, partly. Did he mention that he was expecting me?" "Yes, he mentioned the other evening that you had some business in connection with the Roland case, I believe." "Well, yes; that is, I gave him some notes, which he wishes me to discuss more fully with him."

"Were they relative to Mr. Davis?" she asked, looking him straight in the eye. "Yes, Miss Bliss, you will remember the time he was sick on the train? the date, you see, was the day after the shooting."

"Has Mr. Worthy informed you as to recent developments in the case?" she inquired.

"No, I have only spoken to him for a few minutes this evening, and as he seemed in a hurry I didn't wish to detain him."

"Do you think, doctor, that Mr. Davis knows any-

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thing of the matter? You don't need to suppress your thoughts on account of my feelings, because that matter between us which I mentioned the last time I saw you in Winnipeg is now part of the past."

"But," began Kirk, not knowing where to start. "I understood that Mr. Davis was here only yesterday." "Yes, that is right," said Vickie, "he was here and wanted me to consent to an early marriage, but last night, after he had gone, I found my will, and sent a letter after him telling him once and forever that I would never marry him." "I am very glad, Vickie, to hear you say that. I have always detested the man and wondered how you could care enough for him to marry him."

"I have fairly loathed him of late," she answered, "but all the time I have feared him, too. I think he would be capable of almost anything if he were crossed. I always tremble when he is near me."

"It is rather warm indoors," declared Kirk, wiping the perspiration from his brow, "would you care for a stroll on the hills? They look very inviting through that window." "Yes," she answered, rising, "I should like to show you the town from my big limestone. The hills are so pretty and it is beautiful to watch the sun sink behind that peak over there." Thus, in a few minutes more they had crossed the valley flats and were ascending the hill.

When they had left the house he had decided to

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say nothing of his love to her now. She knew already that he loved her, for had he not declared to her that no other woman would be his wife? And he had been rejected because of her engagement to Davis. Now she had told him with her own sweet lips that the engagement with Davis had been broken forever, but he felt it was too soon to effectively plead his cause; he would return again in a month or so when her mind was more settled and put his fate to the test; to-night he would give her his sympathy. These were his thoughts as they walked side by side across the flats; but when the grassy hillside was reached he had taken her hand to help her up the slope and then another feeling took possession of him.

She seemed tantalizingly beautiful as she sat herself upon her large limestone, and then moved to one side to make room for him beside her. He boldly took the seat and she demanded his approval of the scene before them. "I've been here often," she said, "but before I always came alone."

"This is your throne," he said, "and before us lies your kingdom. You are the queen of the valley and I am your consort." He slipped his arm around her; she cast an inquiring glance at him and, realizing his motive, resisted not his caress, but oh, the power that look had upon his heart! his arm tightened its grasp around her waist and he felt that for her he could fight wild beasts, men, or demons. It would

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be a pleasure to protect so sweet a woman from all harm.

He had not intended to trouble her with the story of his love; he but intended to express some words of sympathy and counsel; but, in that glance, two souls had read each other's thoughts, so the flood-gates of his heart had opened wide and the old-new story of love was told again. He asked for no promise, he was content to tell his story the while holding in his arms the resistless form of the woman he loved. But even as he spoke her head bent forward, her face was hidden on his shoulder, and then he knew that his story was not told in vain. In the ecstasy of his joy he took the further liberty of raising her head and printing upon her lips the pledge of the love within his soul. A large tear had gathered in each love-lit eye and they, too, were kissed away.

He led her to a grassy bank near by, and there, reclining, they talked as lovers do.

"I was thinking of you yesterday, and all day to-day," she confessed, "and I believe that is why you came to me this evening. Whenever I thought of marrying Mr. Davis I thought of you. When I was driving with him, yesterday, I knew I loathed him, and I knew, also, that I loved you, and you only. So I wrote that letter and sent him back his ring," and thus saying, she held up her finger encircled with her own ring only. Kirk caught her finger, and

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slipping off the ring, placed his own on the finger, and then replaced her ring to act as a keeper. He raised her hand and kissed it and, still holding it, he lifted her to her feet, and together they wandered back again to the valley and to the river. "This is what I came from Regina for," Kirk told her, "and my business with Joe Worthy will be to tell him of my good fortune in winning the sweetest girl on earth." "He'll not agree with you in that," replied Vickie, and just then they spied us walking on ahead.

"I feel sure that he is in love with her, and Sadie thinks there is no other man on earth. If they have fixed it up this evening," laughed Vickie, "we will have to have a double wedding." "And Joe and I have already agreed to assist each other," laughed Kirk.

Sadie and I had just passed them, when they turned and followed us a little distance; then, turning off of the path, they went towards Alex Redmond's house and, as they entered, Mrs. Redmond gave them a searching, expectant glance. In reply, Vickie held out her hand to her sister, who, taking it, caught sight of the ring on her finger. She then glanced at Kirk's hand and her eyes caught his, and then she knew it all. A happy smile for a moment passed over her face, as she said to Alex, "Can you guess what these folks have done?" "Something that will make them happy, I'll bet," answered Alex. "Yes," said Kirk, "such a time comes to

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many, and to-night it came to us, and we are already very happy." "Well, doctor, you have my congratulations," said Alex; "and my blessing," put in Mrs. Redmond.

That night Mr. and Mrs. Redmond retired early, but a dim light burned in their parlor until after midnight, and then a happy maiden went to her rest and her lover sought his hotel lodgings.

Kirk and I were still talking when I noticed that by the clock on my desk it was past one, and we had not yet lunched. So I jumped to my feet and held out my hands to him.

"Kirk," I said, "I want to congratulate you. I must say that I admire your choice. If Sadie Smith had not been in my world you certainly would have had me for a rival."

"Well," replied Kirk, "I must extend to her my thanks when I meet her, and I am going to reverse things and offer congratulations to the lady first, and then, I hope, that after I have made her acquaintance, to be able to congratulate you. But I don't know as I need to wait either; no, by George! I won't, Joe! I congratulate you now; because if a man of your judgment made her your first choice she must be O. K."

"Well, doctor, she is certainly my first choice. In fact, she's my *all* choice. Physically, she is my ideal; mentally, she is a greater treasure than I dared to hope for, and best of all, the soul that dwells in

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that body and uses that mind shines in my soul brighter than the noon-day sun, and my greatest hope is that my soul will seem as bright to her."

"Well, Joe, you certainly have a peculiar faculty of analyzing your feelings. I never bother thinking of the body, mind and soul. All that I know is, that I, Henry Kirk, have loved and do love Vickie Bliss. The only thing that I wish to change about her is her last name, and I am going to take her to the *Kirk* and have it amputated."

"I am afraid it is not a medical term, doctor, to speak of amputating an appendix; and I doubt the advisability of allowing a parson to perform an operation. I think, Kirk, if I were you, that I would let her keep Bliss, even if she does go to Kirk."

"I believe you are right, Joe, and one thing I'll bet is, that when you are married your wife will be Worthy, body, mind and soul."

We went off to luncheon, continuing our banter and puns, after which Kirk decided to make the most of his time by getting a horse and buggy and taking Vickie for a drive in the country.

Upon returning to my office I found lying upon my desk an invitation from Mrs. Redmond, asking my presence at dinner that evening, and a note at the bottom stating that she had sent an invitation to Sadie Smith also, and would I be kind enough to call for her. I left the office early, and, calling at Mrs. Johnston's, found Sadie ready and waiting for

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me. I entered the parlor for a few minutes and, sitting on the couch beside her, I showed her my invitation and inquired of her why it was that Mrs. Redmond had connected our names in this manner. Then she showed me her invitation and it, too, contained a note at the bottom stating that Mr. Worthy would call for her.

"How did she know I would?" I queried.

"Well," answered Sadie, with her soul dancing in her eyes, "Vickie was over here this morning, and really, she seemed so happy I asked her what had happened to her. You remember you told me about Dr. Kirk last night. Well, when I looked at her, she burs' into tears, and when I asked her what was wrong she laughed through her tears and then told me all about it."

"And did you burst into tears, too?" I asked, smiling. "No," she replied, "I am too old, I guess. Sometimes I wish I could cry. You know they say it gives a wistful appearance to the eyes."

"And is that all?" I asked. "Oh, no," she went on, "I thought it would be mean to take all her confidences without giving her any, so I told her about our arrangement and she pleaded with me to let her tell Mrs. Redmond. I knew you wouldn't mind, so I told her she could. But isn't it lovely!" she continued. "It seems just like a novel and all too good to be true! Everything seems to come out all right and all of us so happy. Sometimes, to-day, I have

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wondered if it were a delightful dream, and sometimes I was almost afraid to move for fear I would wake up."

"Well, dear girl," I said, as I took her in my arms. "if you are dreaming then keep on dreaming, for you see I am dreaming also; and if so, we will make our dream as nice as possible," and I touched my lips to hers.

"You said, Sadie, that it was all like a novel, but, dear, don't you know that truth or facts are stranger than fiction? In fact, the truer to life the fiction is, the higher its class! I had a wonderful dream last night, Sadie, which, if I were to write down, plenty of people would say that it was imagination run wild. Some time I will tell you about it, but it is time now that we were getting away, for we must not be late on the occasion of our first appearance in a social way, as a united pair."

She looked at me questioningly and I asked her what she was thinking of.

"Joe," she said a little shyly, "you spoke as if we were married already." I looked her straight in the eye and asked her why she spoke in that way.

"Sadie," I continued, "true marriage is a union of two souls, and love is the only power which can unite souls. The few words a person says at a wedding has nothing to do with true marriage. It is only the legalizing of a union supposed to be already accomplished, and the legalizing is necessary for

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only one reason." I hesitated, wishing to so choose my words that I could not be misunderstood, and I particularly wished her to understand my idea. She sat silent a moment and then said, "Joe, I want you to go on. I have thought so often on these things and I have some ideas of my own about marriage which I have kept all to myself; but if you will tell me what you think on this subject I will give you my views."

"I think that probably we have arrived at similar conclusions. What I intended to say was, that there was one reason why it was expedient to legalize marriage. Men and women the world over had, in their impulsive desire for physical union, lost sight of the mental and soul union which must accompany real marriage to make it permanent. So you see in the absence of soul and mental union there must be some compelling force which will accomplish the protection of the children of such physical unions, and the legal marriage accomplishes this end better than anything else known to man. Of course this protection rests on the laws of inheritance, and the accepted responsibility of the father of children to provide for their physical wants. Thus, for the protection of children, the legal marriage becomes necessary and, as national law is obligatory upon every person, it is proper that all should observe the legal marriage. But as the law is made for transgressors only, it is no burden whatever to the

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righteous. The union of two souls by the power of love, followed by mental and physical union, is in accordance with the laws of God, and those thus joined by God no man can put asunder, even if he would, and no righteous person would desire it. To the pure in soul, all things are pure, but the impure would put evil in the place of good."

"Some people assert that marriage is bondage," said Sadie, "and I have seen some cases where it really seemed to be such. But I see by your explanation that in those cases it was a bondage of the body because they had legally bound themselves bodily, apart from the soul and mental union." "Many a young man or woman has rushed into this physical, or I might say, natural marriage, to find, after the development of soul, that they have no soul-mate; and the longing for this soul-mate causes them to look upon their natural or physical marriage as bondage. The man or woman with soul-yearnings should be careful to select a mate who can understand and respond to those yearnings; for with such, the physical union becomes a sacrament."

"Then what of divorce?" she asked.

"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," I replied. "The same law of man which makes physical union legal upon the consent of the contracting parties, should be able to annul that union upon the consent of the contracting parties, if the object of the legal union is fulfilled; that is, the welfare of

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the children that may perhaps result therefrom."

"Your argument would apply to all marriages performed by magistrates, Joe. But would it apply to marriages performed by ministers or priests?"

"Ministers and priests officiating at a marriage are," I replied, "for the time being, acknowledged officers of the State, and are not allowed to act in that capacity without a license from the State, or compliance, with statutory conditions, relative to the publication of banns."

"You think, then, that a Church has no power or authority in the matter of marriage?"

"I know, Sadie," I replied, "that no Church has any power or authority in anything unless it has received it either from the State or from the consent of the individual. Every organization of man having a legal right to exist possesses the right to expel from its membership those who will not comply with its rules of government, and that is the only penalty they can enforce for non-compliance with those rules."

"I believe you are right, Joe, although I will admit that I wasn't clear on that last point. I suppose it was some remnant of superstition clinging to me from the past. But I am glad you mentioned the subject, because knowing your opinions makes me love you more."

I drew her dear form closer to me and told her that I was sure that our soul love would increase as

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time passed, just in proportion as we discovered or developed a mental unity.

"If these subjects were better understood," suggested Sadie, "I think there would be very little for the divorce courts to do, but the trouble is, everybody seems to think it immodest to discuss such things. Even parents seem to woefully neglect the instruction of their sons and daughters."

"I think that is on account of the false notions connected with their religious instruction," I answered. "We have all been taught, or anyway, we got the idea, that the Church had authority from God to unite a couple in what they termed 'holy matrimony' by the performance of a ceremony they called marriage; and when the priest or minister pronounced them man and wife the inference seemed to be that it was by virtue of some magic words spoken by the priest or minister, that they became one. And, thus depending upon the ceremony to sanction their action, thousands of women have gone to the altar and bartered themselves away for wealth or position, thus prostituting both mind and soul; and thousands of evil men have led beautiful and innocent girls to the altar simply to receive public sanction for the gratification of their brutish lusts."

"It was in that class of men I included Arthur Roland, or Davis," said Sadie at last. "Whenever he came near me I experienced a feeling of positive revulsion. He never looked me in the eye and he

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never seemed to think I had a mind or soul, and Vickie was telling me this morning that she had experienced the same feelings after she got to know him."

"Yes," I replied, "he is no doubt one of that class, and it is by no means an insignificant class, either; but did you ever consider, Sadie, that the absurd ideas held by many good people in connection with property rights and marriage are in great measure responsible for the production of such men?"

"To what do you refer?" she asked.

"Well, if we take the literature put into the hands of young people you will find marriage treated as the result of a purely impulsive love; the more unreasonable the love the greater the charm. In one class of this fiction the lady is young and beautiful, but marries a moral leper because he has money and influence. In another kind of story found in Sunday School libraries the young lady is a very sincere Christian, with very insipient ideas of her power to work miracles in the characters of wild young men. She wins the love of an infidel, a drunkard, or a gambler; she reforms him and he becomes a Christian, and a few months later they are married; but the story stops after the wedding.

"Not one man in a hundred reforms, and stays reformed, for the sake of a woman, and he can't be very well reformed if he lives morally only because some one else wants him, too."

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While we were talking we had left Mrs. Johnston's and were now at Alex Redmond's. I rang the bell and Mrs. Redmond admitted us, with a gracious smile, indicating her pleasure and interest in those happy events, the knowledge of which had come to her that day.

When we entered the parlor we met Dr. Kirk and Vickie, and a few moments later Alex came in. The six of us made a very happy party as we sat down to dinner that July evening; and before dispersing Mr. and Mrs. Redmond laid before us their plans for a double wedding at their home, to which, after some discussion, we gave not only our consent, but our sincere thanks. We also arranged that the happy event was to take place some time before the New Year, the day to be chosen by the two ladies most interested.

It was rather late when we dispersed that night, and though Sadie, on our way home, asked me to tell her my dream of the previous night, of which I had spoken earlier in the evening, I begged off on account of the length of it and the many questions which would naturally arise for discussion. But when I bade her good-night I promised to discuss the whole matter concerning it, with her, on the following Sunday.

The next afternoon Dr. Kirk returned to Regina, but arranged to meet us the following week at the Qu' Appelle Lakes, where Alex had a small cot-

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tage which he had built in a beautiful elm grove on the lake shore.

Mr. and Mrs. Redmond, Vickie, Sadie, and I, together with several others of our town, made up our party, and we all looked forward to this outing with the keenest pleasure, feeling as though we were children again while discussing the preparations for the camp.

The balance of that week I settled down to business so that I might have everything cleared up as much as possible, thus enabling me to remain at the camp for several days.

At last the rest and relaxation of Sunday came, and when I awoke and remembered that it was Sunday I lay there on my back, thinking. I thought of Sadie and my love for her. What, I questioned, was, the foundation of that love? Was it the beauty of her fleshly form? and my reason answered no, for many women were as beautiful. In fact, I had found myself in love with her before I had discovered her rare beauty. Then, was it her mental alertness? and again my reason answered no, because I had known many women of high mental capability who had not raised in me the feeling of love. Could it be that it was her soul I loved? and I was just going to conclude with that idea, when I thought again. "How could I love her soul if her body and mind were not there?" and then the truth flashed upon me: that soul, that personality that I loved, had been

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developed in that body by its five senses acting upon that mind, and the mind had separated kernels of fact and ennobling truth from a mass of straw and chaff and had passed it on to feed the soul, just as the stomach digested the food we take into it, and extracting life-sustaining properties, passes it on to the blood to be carried to all parts of the body. And just as the health of the body largely depended upon the health of the stomach, which again was influenced by the kind and quantity of food we took into it, so the soul development depended upon the health of the mind, which again depended upon the quantity and quality of the ideas we fed it with. And again, as bodily health and activity reacted upon all its organs, so the soul possessed a strong reflex action upon the mind, the body, and all its organs, and this reflex action was the manifestation of the soul through which I had made its acquaintance.

Ah, thought I, that is the way God was manifest in the flesh, in the personality of Michael, who was appointed to save the world from sin, and therefore called Jesus. Saviour, Christ—anointed or appointed. How simple it all seemed: God (good) was manifested in every good act performed, because it was good.

When I got this far in the process of analysis I made another discovery as to my own soul. The fact that the desire of love of woman was there, was an acknowledgment of its own incompleteness; but then

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another thought flashed through my mind, and, being instantly taken up by my soul, I felt its vibrations through every fiber of my being—though I was incomplete of myself and Sadie was incomplete in herself, we, in ourselves, were complete. We two were one flesh, one mind, one soul, one personality, both here and hereafter.

Then I remembered one of the statements of the wise man in the Garden of Wisdom, that Michael was the very heart of the Tree of Life. That all the species of life's evolutions were but the branches of that tree, each branch an offshoot from the main stock; the angelic hosts were the wood, the bark, and the leaves, of the main stock; each branch was a manifestation of a certain kind of life, and a registration of the highest evolutions that life had reached at the time the species had appeared. Man was the highest branch upon the tree, monkeys and baboons were branches just below, and so on down the trunk to the lowest orders of life. Man had never been a monkey then, and a monkey had never been a frog, but the fact of the existence of a frog or a monkey merely proves that at those stages in the evolution of life a female appeared on the scene, and ever since frogs have been frogs and monkeys have been monkeys; and so of all other forms of life. And humanity had become humanity when Adam (who was made as all other species, had been made, in the likeness of Michael and his associates) cast off the

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female and thus becoming a single-sex being, desired the woman so that again he might experience the sensation of completeness.

How plain all this seemed to my mind! The development or evolution had progressed through complete, or non-sex beings, who possessed the spirit of perpetual life and thus did in themselves experience the gradual change of their physical body. Life had been transmitted without physical change in sex beings, and death had held dominion over them, but soul evolution and development had progressed throughout the ages. Non-sex beings holding life in perpetuity their knowledge was gained by personal experience and observation since the dawn of conscious being; while in sex beings this knowledge must be transmitted by instinct or tradition, and was therefore very incomplete, because the greater portion of the wisdom of the wise must perish with them. Thus, ignorance has enslaved the many, and those things which are simple and easy to understand under proper instruction, are made mysteries to unravel as riddles; and so the cunning among mankind, pretending to have solved the riddle, seek to subjugate the minds of the ignorant.

Michael has declared the truth unto mankind, but they who would lord it over their brethren have turned it into mysteries and fables.

Ah, thought I, it is no wonder that one has stated that darkness covered the earth and gross darkness

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the people! And when the light of Michael illuminated the darkness, it is stated that he brought Life and Immortality to light through his good tidings; yes, he brought life to the understanding of mankind —perpetual life resulting from a perfect knowledge of, and compliance with, Sex Laws. Adam had been a complete being before the development of Eve, and even after her development, death had no dominion over them, until they transgressed the laws of sex; and thus will humanity exist in the new earth by a proper union of the man and the woman. Then the transmission of life shall cease and death shall be no more. And even Time, that measuring tape of a limited life, shall be required no longer.

I arose, dressed, and went to my breakfast, still thinking on these subjects, for to me they were intensely interesting; and after my physical nature was satisfied I slipped my Bible into my pocket and sought the shades of the wooded slopes on the southern bank of the river, and when I stretched myself upon the grassy bank, out of reach of the heat-producing rays of that July sun, and watched the clear, cool water of a spring sparkling in the sunlight, as it came dashing over a little waterfall on its way to the river, I thought, What a beautiful world it is! The bees were buzzing their sleepy hum as they swung from flower to flower, in their search for honey; the birds twittered in the branches above me; the waterfowl on the river kept up a constant chatter.

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and a black eagle, high up in the bright sunlight, whistled as he soared back and forth over the valley. All spoke of industry, of rest, and contentment.

I turned over and looked down into the grass, where a sunbeam penetrating the foliage, was dancing over the ground as the trees swayed in the gentle breeze. When my eyes became used to this short focus I discovered that many little creatures were running and creeping in all directions. Ants, bugs, beetles and worms, went stumbling over the dead grass or climbed the living blades, as a bear would climb an oak tree. Everything seemed busy hunting for its own particular kind of food, and, as I watched all these little creatures, I wondered if they could discern me: or was my face and head so large to them that they could not see its form? and, if they thought at all, would they merely think it was a cloud above them? Then I remembered that these little creatures were monsters compared with other forms of life-animated matter. I wondered if it were possible that there were other creatures in the universe who were as great to us, as we would be to those insects. Was it possible that the earth itself possessed a conscious life? Conscious of its flight through space, and we but parasites upon it, even as a flea upon an elephant; or were life and matter eternal, acting and reacting upon each other throughout the universe; were they not the very body and life of God through which moved intelligence or

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soul power? Life, the male principle, and material, the female principle, which made creation possible, each attracting the other, ever endeavoring to maintain the equilibrium of life and matter. This would explain the power of gravity. I picked up a small stone and tossed it up, but soon the energy of life I had put into it was overcome by the energy in the earth, and it fell back to the ground. It was not the mass of material in the earth's bulk which had caused it to return, but the life-energy in the earth's interior, which exerts an equal force over all matter in proportion to its density.

I jumped to my feet with a feeling of delight. I had made a wonderful discovery. Newton had taught that each particle of matter attracted, or was attracted by, every other particle of matter; but Newton had made a great mistake, for it was the energy of life which attracted all matter. He had discovered that the attraction of gravity was exerted over all matter, but had attributed the power to other inert matter instead of to the power of intelligent life. And so, scientific men since Newton's time had attempted to explain that larger bodies attracted smaller bodies first in proportion to their size and density; but when confronted with the fact that the moon was not falling into the sun, they invented the idea of repulsion, the laws of which they did not understand. The facts of the matter were, that Life was ever endeavoring to maintain the equilibrium of Matter, and

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the earth and all the other planets were either receiving or giving off this energy according to their relative position to the sun. In fact, the sun itself might be a ball of life-energy in the centre of this planetary system, caused by the cross currents of this magnetic power—a radio-active centre of energy. The old idea of its being a ball of fire seemed crude, to say the least, for had its bulk been pure carbon in the first place, it would have been consumed ages ago.

As I stood there thinking, another idea went coursing through my mind. Alex Redmond had, upon one occasion, while trying to disprove the statement of the Bible, said that the author of Genesis knew nothing of science because he had stated that light was the first act of the Creator, who, the fourth day, made the sun. I had my Bible with me: so I opened it at the beginning and started to read, "And God said, 'Let there be light and there was light.'" Why, this is simple, I thought; life-energy makes light and heat, and its action on the void and shapeless earth was to create the firmament; then all life's evolutions became possible. I read on to the 16th verse "And God (Life) made two great lights, the greater to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night. He made the stars also." I read on to the 19th verse, "And the evening and the morning were the fourth day" (or period).

This radio-active centre we call the sun became

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visible during the fourth period of evolving nature; during this period other planets had also received the life-energy, and its action upon them also was to produce light and heat, and thus the cross magnetic currents set up between the planetary family had created the sun to be the great reservoir of magnetic power for all the planets. Its light was reflected back upon the waters which were above the firmament. The light of the sun above and the light and heat of the earth beneath upheld the firmament, and all that even now was necessary to restore the heavens as they were, was, that the earth should regain sufficient of that life-energy which would again lift the water into the firmament and thus, by excluding the cold, create a hot-house condition over the whole surface of the earth.

It was now after twelve o'clock, so I turned my footsteps towards town again, immediately after lunch seeking the presence of Sadie Smith. And during that afternoon I related to her my wonderful dream of the angel in the garden of Wisdom and the ideas which had lodged in my mind during my morning meditation.

She entered into the discussion of all these subjects with a zeal and power of comprehension which both surprised and delighted me. I realized by the trend of her questions and answers that she had grasped every idea. Even when discussing such a delicate question as the proper relation of the sexes,

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when modesty compelled me to veil my real meaning, I knew by the light in her eye that she had apprehended my complete thought. And when, before bidding her good night, I took her into my arms and gazed again into the depths of those love-lit eyes, seeing in them wells of knowledge and purity, I felt thrilled with a love so pure that it seemed to cleanse my soul from every taint of sin, so that I went forth into the night feeling that I had received life more abundant, because I had seen the light which shineth from above and had felt the warmth of its reflective power as it shone from the soul of the woman I loved. I remembered that passage of Scripture where the Master said to "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and thus glorify your father which is in heaven." "Ah," reflected I, "there are lights above and there are also lights below, and these lower lights must be kept burning."

OUR CAMP IN THE ENCHANTED VALLEYS.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR CAMP IN THE ENCHANTED VALLEYS—LOVE'S
REWARD AND MORNING LIGHT.

DURING the next few days, while the others were preparing for our trip to that beautiful body of water lying in the far-famed and Eden-like valley of the Qu' Appelle River, I was occupied in the task of arranging in order all the circumstances of Roland's or Davis's actions, the finding of the note-book, and the discovery of the watch, so that I might present the same to the Attorney General's Department at Regina, as soon as possible. The evidence was so strong against Davis that I felt sure that the Crown would dismiss the case against Ray. And in this I was not disappointed, as will be seen later.

The day of our departure to the Lake was perfect, and, as the trails were in the best condition for travelling, we arrived at our destination early in the afternoon and immediately began the unpacking of pots and pans, tents and bedding, and many other articles we knew by experience were useful around a camp. Ere supper-time had arrived our tents

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were erected in a row, our horses picketed, and wood had been gathered for our camp-fire. Next, the bed-springs which we had provided ourselves with, were put together and placed upon four stakes driven into the ground in each tent, and when the bedding was spread thereon, each provided a couch by day and a bed during the hours of our dreams. A comb, brush and looking-glass were hung to the back tent-pole, and a lantern swung from each ridge-pole. Our grips and boxes, containing food supplies, together with bags of oats for our horses, were arranged at the tent sides; while in front of the tents four more posts were driven into the ground and on these a table was soon formed, out of boxes and poles, of sufficient size to accommodate our party. Then the seats were taken from the democrats and arranged around the table, and a bower was constructed of poles and willow boughs to protect us from the scorching rays of the sun. Alex and Mrs. Redmond occupied their little cottage, but the rest of us preferred the tents, until one night a terrible thunder-storm came down upon us which drove us all to the cottage for protection.

I had procured a boat for the time we intended to remain at the camp and when my fishing tackle was arranged, ready for use, I gave Sadie an invitation to accompany me early in the morning on a fishing expedition down the lake. I awoke at daybreak and, hurriedly dressing, I went to her tent to arouse

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her, but found that she was already up, and in another minute I, with my arm around her, went towards the lake shore where our boat was moored. I placed her in the rear seat and gave her the trolling line while I took the oars, and away we glided out over the pleasant and tranquil bosom of the water.

Were we happy? Yes, but we were more than happy. I felt, as we floated over those waves in the early morning light as though I were the only man on all the earth, and, as I looked at Sadie, dressed in a short skirt and sailor blouse, the breeze blowing the loose hair across her face, I felt as if she were the only woman in the world—and she was mine!

Then the sun rose in all his glory and cast his horizontal beams across the surface of the water. Sadie cried in delight that it was like a path of glory leading on to sacred realms of delight. I turned my boat into the shining path and sailed straight for the sun. The light was at my back as I rowed, but it poured over my shoulders and bathed Sadie in an effulgence of glory; as long as life animates my being, her image, as she appeared that morning, will remain fresh in my memory.

We caught a couple of large pickerel on our return journey, and, after landing, we procured a butcher-knife and scaled and cleaned the fish, ready for breakfast, receiving the thanks of the others for our con-

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tribution to the morning meal, we enjoying our share immensely.

After breakfast I dug a hole in the sand and sunk in it a packing-box in which to keep our milk, butter and meat from the heat of the day.

In the afternoon of that day Dr. Kirk arrived from Regina and a short time after his arrival we all donned our bathing clothes and took to the water. All the men of our party were good swimmers, but some of the ladies not having learned that art had provided themselves with water-wings which kept their bodies afloat upon the surface and enabled them to swim along at our sides. Then, leaving the water, we would sit upon the smooth, sandy beach and bury our feet in the warm, clean sand, and talk of the joys of the present and plans for the future.

The next day was spent much the same as the first, except that the second morning Dr. Kirk and Vickie accompanied us on our early morning trip across the lake. The third day we provided ourselves with a lunch, and adding Alex and his wife to our party, the six of us steered our craft up the lake on a voyage of discovery. We had provided ourselves with a couple of small pails, and beaching our boat on a point of land, we penetrated into the thick brush and procured a goodly supply of raspberries and saskatoons. We also discovered a beautiful spring of clear cold water, and here we ate our lunch and quenched our thirst. Then, just before sunset,

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we again embarked and departed down the lake for our camp in the elm grove.

During the day we had discussed ethics, religion, politics, nature, art and music, and now, as we drifted onward, Alex was giving us a lecture on marriage and the perpetuation of love, and he added, "I believe Joe is right in regard to the other five relationships of life. If love can rule all the circumstances of marriage it should also be successful in the training of the young, the governing of a community, a nation, a world, or the universe. If that was the teaching of the carpenter's son then I gladly give him honor. And I only hope to see the establishment of his promised kingdom here upon this earth of ours."

While he was talking I could see admiration and joy written upon the face of his wife, who, during the four years of their wedded life, had learned to love and trust him more and more, and even Vickie seemed to regard his declaration with satisfaction, and also some admiration for the husband of her sister.

While we were thus occupied the moon rose large and yellow over the hilltops and, as the twilight deepened, a silvery path stretched like a ribbon across the placid water. Upon the inspiration of the moment Alex picked up his auto-harp, which he had brought with him, and striking its chords, he lifted his voice in harmony and sang.

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"At night when the moon in her pride
Comes, queen of the soft summer night,
And gleams on the murmuring tide,
With the floods of its silvery light.
Oh, earth has no beauty so rare,
No place that is dearer to me;
Then, give me, so free and so fair,
A home by the deep heaving sea."

When he finished the song, I reached for the harp. I, too, had caught an inspiration from the moon and the stars shining from above, and the beacon light of our camp-fire brightly burning upon the shore. I found my chord and started to sing.

"Oh, come, Maidens, come, o'er the blue rolling
wave,
For the lovely shall still be the care of the brave.

"Trank a dillow, trank a dillow,
Trank a dillow, dillow, dillow, dillow,
By moonlight and starlight
We'll bound o'er the billow!
Bright billow, gray billow,
The billow, billow, billow,
By moonlight and starlight
We'll bound o'er the billow!

"Wake the chorus of song and our oars shall keep
time,

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While our hearts gently beat to the musical chime.

(Chorus—Third and seventh lines.)

By oar-beat and heart-beat.

"Sec the helmsman look forth to you, beacon-lit Isle,
So we shape our hearts' course by the light of
your smile.

(Chorus—Third and fourth lines.)

With love light and smile light
We'll bound o'er life's billow.

And when on life's ocean
We turn our slight prow,
May the lighthouse of hope
Beam like this on us now.

(Chorus—Seventh and eighth lines.)

With love light, the only true light,
We'll bound o'er life's billow."

The others joined me each time when I came to the chorus, and we sang it in unison. When we finished the last chorus there came echoing over the water from the southern wooded bank,

"With love light, the only true light,
We'll bound o'er life's billow!"

"What's that?" cried Vickie, "Listen!" and then,

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as the last words died away, she continued, "It sounds like an angel band."

"I don't know what an angel band sounds like," remarked Alex, "having never so far in my life heard one."

"Well, it certainly sounded very sweet," declared Mrs. Redmond, and the words were those that an angel band would be expected to sing.

"Yes," I said, "those words mean virtually the same as when the angels sang to the shepherds of Bethlehem, 'Peace on earth and good-will toward men,' and that echo," I continued, "reminds me of the legend as to the reason this beautiful valley and river received the name of Qu' Appelle."

"Oh, tell us!" cried Sadie and Vickie in the same breath.

"To tell you the story," I answered, "I can't do better than recite to you the poem of the Indian poetess, Pauline Johnson." So I began.

"I am the one who loved her as my life,
Had watched her grow to sweet young womanhood,
Won the dear privilege to call her wife,
And found the world because of her was good.
I am the one who heard the spirit voice
Of which the palefaced settlers love to tell,
From whose strange story they have made their
choice,
Of naming this fair valley the Qu' Appelle.

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"So the long days went slowly drifting past,
It seemed that half my life must intervene
Before the morrow, when I said at last,
One more day's journey and I win my Queen.
I rested then, and drifting, dreamed the more
Of all the happiness I was to claim,
When suddenly from out the shadowed shore
I heard a voice speak tenderly my name.

"'Who calls?' I answered: no reply; and long
I stilled my paddle blade and listened. Then,
Above the night wind's melancholy song
I heard distinctly that strange voice again:
A woman's voice, that through the twilight came
Like a soul unborn, a song unsung;
I leaned and listened—yes, she spoke my name,
And then I answered in a quaint French tongue:

"Qu' Appelle? Qu' Appelle? No answer: then the
night
Seemed stiller for the sound; then round me fell
The far-off echoes from the far-off height—
'Qu' Appelle?' my voice came back. 'Qu' Appelle?
Qu' Appelle?'
This and no more; I called aloud until
I shuddered as the gloom of night increased,
And, like a pallid spectre, wan and chill,
The moon arose in silence from the East.

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"I dare not linger on the moment when,
My boat I beached beside her tepee door;
I heard the wail of women and of men,
I saw the death fires lighted on the shore.
No language tells the torture or the pain,
The bitterness that flooded all my life,
When I was led to look on her again,
That Queen of women, pledged to be my wife.

"To look upon the beauty of her face,
The still, closed eyes, the lips that knew no breath,
To look, to learn, to realize my place,
Had been usurped by my one rival—Death.
A storm of wreaking sorrow beat and broke
About my heart, and life shut out its light,
Till through my anguish some one gently spok',
And said, 'Twice did she call for thee last night.'
I started up and, bending o'er my dead,
Asked, 'When did her sweet lips in silence close?'
'She called thy name, then passed away,' they said,
'Just on the hour whereat the moon arose.'

"Among the lonely lakes I go no more,
For she who made their beauty is not there,
The paleface rears his tepee on the shore,
And says the vale is fairest of the fair.
Full many years have vanished since, but still
The voyageurs beside the camp-fire tell,

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How when the moon-rise tips the distant hill,
They hear strange voices through the silence swell.

"The paleface loves the haunted lakes, they say,
And journeys far to watch their beauty spread,
Before his vision; but to me the day,
The night, the hour, the season—all are dead.
I listen, heart-sick, while the hunters tell,
Why white men named the valley the Qu' Appelle."

As I finished, our boat touched the shore, and I sprang out and drew it on the sandy beach.

"That is a lovely legend," remarked Sadie, as I took her by the hand and she stepped out of the boat.

"It made me feel creepy," declared Vickie, "I am glad we are back to land."

" 'Twas the same echo," I replied, "which to-night sounded like an angel band.

" 'Twas over that same hill the moon arose,
'Twas over this same vale the shadows fell,
'Twas that same echo as the voyageur knows,
Which answered back the enchanting name, Qu' Appelle."

"I think they must have loved each other very much," said Sadie, "and it seems nice to think that this lake, these hills, and this valley, have been familiar to lovers for perhaps thousands of years."

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"And lovers have before walked through this elm grove with that same moon shining down upon them," said I, as I passed my arm around her waist and started for the camp, followed by the others in similar fashion.

It has ever since been a great pleasure to me to remember again the happy days thus spent at the lake camp, the early morning fishing, the afternoon bathing, the evenings on the lake, or telling stories of the early days as we sat around the camp-fire at night, while the crackle and smell of burning willow carried me back to my childhood days, when I sat upon the buffalo robes around the wigwam fire and sang songs to the painted braves, as they smoked their red stone pipes filled with kinie-kan-nick, the dried bark of the red willow.

Ah, but those are happy memories of the past which shall bring joy to our hearts, as long as we live!

After a week of such pleasure we returned home, to again take up the duties of life, feeling refreshed, yes, recreated; and it was a happy omen to me that the first person we met upon arriving in town was Fred Ray, who had just arrived from Regina, having been liberated by the Crown, as the case against him was dismissed. He thanked me for the interest I had taken in his case, and the work which I had accomplished in his behalf. And he informed me that the police had been despatched for the purpose of

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apprehending Davis-Roland, wherever he might be discovered.

Shortly after our return from the Lake I began the construction of our home on the property which I had already purchased, along the riverbank, at the *joining of the waters*. Dr. Kirk had decided to locate in our town and had, during the month of August, hung out his sign, and now he also was busy with preparations for a new home near ours. Sadie had resumed her duties as teacher in the village school as she wished to complete the term. She and Vickie had decided on December 23d for our wedding-day, and the doctor and I were arranging a great surprise for the ladies. We proposed to them a honeymoon trip as far as Winnipeg, but planned a three months' excursion to Toronto and New York, before our return. Our homes were completed before the cold weather set in and they were now furnished and ready for occupancy. Sadie and Vickie had hinted to their friends of winter parties and made other engagements of a social nature and as they talked of such things the doctor and I chuckled with glee when we thought of the surprise our plans would bring.

The wedding day at last arrived and the wonderful event passed off very pleasantly as most events of the kind do. And if the reader desires a more elaborate account of the affair, he or she, as the case may be, should turn up the files of our local

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paper published the following day, or the reports which appeared in the Winnipeg papers and which we read with some pleasure in our rooms at the Empire Hotel a couple of days after the event.

On Christmas night we proposed to the ladies that we would return west as far as Brandon by the morning train, Kirk pretending to dislike Winnipeg, and the ladies very reluctantly consented to this arrangement. So, on the morrow, we entered the Union Station near by and purposely boarded a train for Minneapolis, instead of the one for Brandon. As we left the train and entered the station Vickie looked around in surprise and exclaimed, "Why, this is not the Brandon station."

"It is not the C. P. R. Station," said her husband laughing. "You never saw the C. N. R. Station before," he continued, winking at me.

"Oh, no," answered Vickie, "when I went to Brandon to see Aunt Jane I traveled by the C. P. R. I only wish she was home so we could call on her," she added. "Isn't she home?" asked Kirk, relieved.

"Why, no," answered Vickie, "she has gone to Toronto to Uncle Robert's, where mother is. They intend to have a family gathering there on New Year's Day. My, wouldn't I like to drop in on them."

The next day we went out to see the sights of the city and Vickie declared she did not recognize a single street, while Sadie expressed great surprise at the size of the place. She had no idea that Brandon

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was a city of such dimensions. That evening we left for Chicago but pretended to the ladies that Regina was our destination. When morning came they noticed that the snow was getting less and less and the country did not look like the Saskatchewan prairie. The ladies wanted to know what it meant, but we just laughed and told them that they were lost; and then they began to pay more attention to the country, the buildings, and the appearance of the towns we passed through, but before they were able to guess where we were, the brakeman called "Chicago next!" and they looked at us inquiringly. When we admitted the trick we had played on them their joy knew no bounds. We showed them our tickets for Toronto, and they declared that they would have us arrested for abduction, and as soon as we were alone Sadie began my arrest by seizing me around the neck and subjecting me to a penalty of twenty kisses.

We decided to spend but a few days in Chicago and then go on to Toronto for New Year's, so Kirk sent a telegram to Vickie's mother telling her that they would arrive on Saturday, the 31st. Upon leaving the train at the Union Station we met Mrs. Bliss and Vickie's Uncle Robert. After introductions, Dr. Kirk and Vickie went with their relatives, while Sadie and I registered at the Walker House.

After spending a very pleasant week in Toronto we continued our journey to New York, via Buffalo,

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over the Lehigh Valley Road. We enjoyed the scenery as we passed from New York State into Pennsylvania, even the black coal-mining districts arousing our interest. There was now no snow to meet our gaze and as we entered the State of New Jersey, and sped downward toward the sea, the country lay before us almost green, and presented a great contrast to the snow-covered prairies of the West.

Upon arriving at the Pennsylvania Station we took the elevator, and sinking some eighty-five feet under ground, entered a Hudson Tunnel train bound for New York City.

The Hotel we put up at seemed an ideal place for such a party as ours, everything about the place possessed a home-like appearance; even the wall decorations were not what one expected to find in an hotel. The dining room was especially pleasing, possessing an old fashioned fireplace, with old guns crossed over the mantelpiece and clusters of bayonets fastened to the wall at several places, to be utilized as hat racks. The idea was pleasing to me and I wished that all the guns and bayonets in the world could be used for the same purpose.

From this hotel as our home we visited all the principal places of attraction in the city, which we could crowd into our three weeks' stay. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Central Park and the Menagerie. We viewed the city from the top of the Singer Building. We visited the Eden Musee and

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its chamber of horrors and spent a day at the Bronx Park and another afternoon at the old Battery, now containing an aquarium. We visited the theatres several times, but, most pleasing of all, so voted the ladies, was an afternoon at the wonderful and charming Hippodrome, which they declared surpassed their wildest dreams of fancy. And I now have come to the conclusion that they will never tire of talking of its wonders.

When Sunday came we crossed over to Brooklyn and listened to a sermon delivered by the celebrated Pastor Russell in the Academy of Music.

But Dr. Kirk and I had a particular reason in wishing to visit New York which we had not mentioned even to our brides. Therefore, when the first occasion offered we excused ourselves and went about our business, commanding them to take a good rest that they might be in trim for the next day's outings.

Kirk had become much interested in my theory of the Hollow Poles leading to the interior of the earth, and it was our idea to ascertain the possible cost of an airship and suitable equipment to make the journey to the poles. Learning that the celebrated Dr. Cook was in the city we decided to procure an interview if possible, when, we would lay before him my theory, together with our plans to reach the interior.

Wherever we went in New York we saw bills



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posted up with large headlines—"Dr. Cook's Confession in *Hampton's Magazine* for January." So we purchased and read his story and found that he still thought he had reached the pole but admitted the impossibility of proving his claims.

I felt sure that both he and Peary had been deceived because of their assumption of the theory of a round, solid earth. They had practically both reached the rim of that funnel-shaped region where the sextant would indicate 90 degrees north of the equator. But that point was not necessarily the axis of the earth.

After a day or so we procured the interview and we had the pleasure of meeting the genial explorer in his rooms at the Waldorf-Astoria. As I laid my theory before him and explained my reasons for arriving at my conclusions I saw that he was becoming intensely interested. And when I had finished he stated that one thing he could say for my theory: "It wasn't impossible. And if true, it would explain in a perfectly natural and satisfactory manner every difficulty which had been observed by explorers in arctic and antarctic regions."

"One thing I see about the theory," remarked Dr. Kirk, "if true it would entirely exonerate you, Doctor, from the charge of wilful fraud, and place you on the level with your rival Peary."

"I am not troubling myself about Peary," replied Dr. Cook, "time will prove that there was nothing

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fraudulent about my report as endorsed by me after I had inspected the proof sheets. But I would advise you, Mr. Worthy, to publish your theory. Get it before the people. They'll pummel you, no doubt, as they have pummeled me, but you look as if you could stand it all right."

Upon leaving his rooms after the interview he accompanied us to the elevator, and, cordially shaking hands with us, wished me every success in my effort to get the ear of the public. I gave him my card and hotel address and, thanking him for the interview, we withdrew with the feeling that whatever the public thought of him, Dr. Cook was all right.

"Well," said Kirk, as we stepped out of the elevator, "if he's a faker he is a slick one."

"His eyes don't look like those of an impostor," I replied. "and I hope and believe that in time he will be vindicated."

Upon returning to our hotel Sadie met me as we entered the parlor, with a paper in her hand. She knew that I had always believed that Cook penetrated as far north as Peary, so her first words were, "Here is something about Cook." "Oh," said the Doctor, "and we have just been talking with him."

But Sadie cast on him an incredulous glance.

"Well, Mrs. Worthy, if you won't believe me, ask your husband."

She looked me in the eye and said, "Honest now?"

"Honest Injun. Sadie," I replied. "I explained the



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whole Hollow Earth idea to him and now the next thing for us to do is to purchase an airship and fly to the hollow pole and enter the interior."

"We won't let you go," cried both ladies at the same moment.

"Oh, but we'll carry out our plan of abduction and take you along. If Noah and his sons hadn't brought their wives along when they crossed the flood I guess we would not be in New York today. And one thing is certain, we're not going without our brides, because, you see, after we got inside the earth we might not be able to get back again and I wouldn't expect to find any ladies in the interior. Angels, I think, are the habitants of that country, and you can rest assured that we are not going without our wives."

"Well, ladies," said Dr. Kirk, as he still stood in the middle of the floor, "it will take a year or more before we could get ready to start, if we concluded that the airship idea was a feasible one. The project will require a lot of study and calculation, and also a lot of cash. More, in fact, than we can lay our hands on at the present moment. But we must see the test made; even if it takes years."

"But what was the article you said you had about Dr. Cook?" I asked, turning to Sadie. She handed me the paper which she still held in her hand, and, as we were the sole occupants of the parlor, I read it from large head-lines.

ONE CAMP IN THE ENCHANTED VALLEYS.

SPOOKS DECIDE AGAINST PEARY.

SPRIT WORLD IS EXCITED BY POLAR CONTROVERSY.

"MR. RAY W. T. STEAD AND MR. COLBURN—HEAR
MESSAGES FROM THE DEAD—DENY FINDING OF
THE POLE.

"WHOLE MATTER IS LAID BEFORE A MEMBER OF THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS, WASH-
INGTON, D. C., JAN. 17TH.

"According to the testimony of prominent alleged
disembodied spirits neither Cook nor Peary reached
the North Pole, but Cook got nearer to the goal than
his rival."

"Well, I guess those alleged disembodied spirits
know what they are talking about," I remarked,
when I had finished the article. "They know all
about the North Pole and they know that if Cook
and Peary had gone farther they would have dis-
covered a different country from the place they
called the pole up there on the Polar Circle."

"But doesn't it seem strange, Joe, that these fallen
angels, which of course are disembodied spirits,
should take any interest in the Polar controversy,
and why would they lead Cook, as this article states,
as far as he went and then leave him to his own
resources?"

"Well, there is no doubt that it would be the de-

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sire of these disembodied angels that man should take the kingdom of heaven by force. You see, if man in his present state could make a forcible entrance into that paradise of Michael and his hosts and gain eternal life while yet under the influence of Lucifer, it would mean the defeat of Michael. They no doubt approached as near as they dared, to the gates of Paradise, hoping that Cook would go on and make the great discovery, so that when he returned, mankind would attempt to take that land by force of arms. But, as the authority of Michael can only be maintained by love, and as love for Michael can only grow from knowledge of his gracious plans for all mankind, the angel of the flaming sword must turn the explorer back. The secrets of the Hollow Earth must not be revealed to man unless the same revelation asserts the power and might and glory of Michael's blessed reign, and that nothing can enter there that loveth or maketh a lie; but the time will come when the rulers of the outer earth will take their glory and honor into it, for its gates shall not be shut by day or night for there is no night there."

As I spoke I felt that it was not I who had uttered the words of my mouth but the spirit within me. The others looked at me in wonder, seeming to have somewhat the same feeling. Sadie stepped to my side and took my hand in hers. But I had not finished, my soul still experienced the control of the

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spirit and I continued, "Ignorance is the cause of sin and the deception of Lucifer is the cause of ignorance. He has cast his spell of blindness over all the earth. The very church of the anointed has turned to a babel of contending factions, and beneath the sway of this modern Babylon are the people held by fear and ignorance; and their fear is taught by the precepts of men; and they are held in ignorance, that the powers that be may not be overthrown; but in one day shall she come to naught and none shall help her."

I had finished, and Sadie led me to a seat, and for a few moments all was quiet. Then she said, "Joe, you must write a book and give your knowledge to the people. It is your duty to let them know the truth so that Babylon may be overthrown, though the kings and rulers of the earth shall weep and wail when they see the destruction of her power. For through her are they permitted to maintain the separate nations."

I felt that Sadie also had spoken from compulsion, and so, in compliance with her command and her expressed wish, I have written my book, because having seen the light which is above I have desired to take a coal from off the altar and kindle a light below.

We expect some day to enter the earth's interior and, after our return, I may give the public a description of our trip and the conditions of that entrancing

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land and its inhabitants; but in the meantime, the reader can draw on his own imagination and picture a glorious land of endless life where love is the only law. A land, therefore, where are no rich and no poor, but where abundance continueth. A land where there are no selfish capitalists grasping power over their fellows, and no labor unions endeavoring to hold them in check. A land where there are no separate nations which must maintain at vast expense their standing armies and their fleets of battleships, to protect themselves from the aggressiveness of others.

And why, dear reader, have we such conditions on the outer surface of the earth, to fill our hearts with trouble? I answer, because Lucifer is the Prince of the power of the air; because he and his confederates, away back in the ages, captured the church of the Anointed, Michael, and she has made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication.

But Babylon is fallen. Her power over the people is almost at an end. So lift up your heads and rejoice, for your deliverance draweth nigh, and while you wait for it, love on, and labor on, in the vineyard, though it be the eleventh hour. Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased. So help to increase the knowledge of truth when you travel from place to place. And remembering that the knowledge of truth is the light which shineth from above, watch that you may become one of the lower

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lights and thus assist in the binding of Lucifer, and the deliverance of your fellow man.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people and there shall be a time of trouble such as had not been since there was a nation even to that same time. But remember that the night is darkest just before the dawn. And when the lights below shine as the lights above we shall have the New Heaven and the New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. And then the Spectres of the Night shall disappear and the Morning Light shall envelop the World in the effulgence of its glory."